KODAKA KAZUTAKA
小高和剛
ILLUSTRATION:
小松崎類
ダンガンロンパ
DANGANRONPA / ZERO
ゼロ
サイコロジック、ここに始まる。
刊行に先駆けて
上巻分を期間無期限・全文掲載!
全ミステリーファンを沸騰させた傑作ゲーム「ダンガンロンパ」の目眩く"前日譚"を、
担当シナリオライター・小高和剛が自ら小説化。

CHAPTER 1

Enoshima Junko despaired.

Anything and everything ended up just the way she wanted.

Everything concluded just as she had hoped, and so she despaired.

Why does it always run so smoothly?

A hot magma boiled up from the pit of her stomach and exploded as it reached her chest. It spread from her heart and flowed through every muscle in her body. Water was slowly growing around her feet, she could hear a splashing sound as droplets danced around her.

Looking more closely, you could see the water dripping down was a bright red.

She took a step and the bright red water met her feet and showered across her.

Her clothing was dyed red with blood,

her hair was dyed red with blood,

her face was dyed red with blood.

But the girl didn't care. She was intent on just trampling the ground.

Then, with her entire being, with everything she could muster, with her whole body and soul stomped her foot. She slammed her foot to the ground as if she were a demonic beast on a rampage… and she then yelled a curse at herself.

"This isn't it!"

Her screams echoed around her, like a stone shattering into small pebbles.

But still she continued, "More! More!" She screamed, "More! I want a more despair-inducing despair!" and she continued stamping her foot to the ground.

A more despair-inducing despair… yes, that's what she wished for. She wanted the world to be in despair, and she wanted herself to be taken by despair.

"More more more! A more despair-inducing desp-" She stopped in mid-sentence suddenly.

A spark of an idea interrupted her tirade. Her surprised expression remained on her face, her entire body was dyed red stood motionless and still.

"…….. That's right," she whispered to herself.

There was a tap inside her skull, like someone pressed a switch and slowly her entire brain lit up with a notion. Several faces appeared. Of course, they were faces she knew… they were the faces of her Hope's Peak Academy classmates.

"…… Upupu."

A tremble shook through her body and her lips curved into a smile. She smashed her foot to the earth once again as she cackled and shook.

"Upu…. upupupup

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 2

Hope's Peak Private Academy.

Only high school students with special talents are allowed into this school sanctioned by the government. They are taught so they can become the 'hope' of the country. It's a school that was deserved to be called the school of hope. Therefore, since people would say, 'Any student that graduates from this school will become successful in life,' it attracted some envy. Seeing as how now most graduates are employed in high positions in their profession, it would not take a genius to realise it was not a simple exaggeration.

There are two requirements in order to enter Hope's Peak Academy.

-To be currently enrolled as a High School Student.

-To be the very best in their chosen field.

There is no entrance exam required to enter Hope's Peak Academy. Since the students entering all have different talents, it would not make sense… that's one of the school's policies. Student's are scouted out by Hope's Peak Academy faculty members who are also researching and teaching such talent. It is said these faculty members and staff are very much like the foster parents of talent. Finding talent and then nurturing it, to them it was a very important mission.

But, now they were…

Now the school was…

Facing a previously unprecedented and unheard of crisis.

Hope's Peak Academy, east district, faculty buildings.

The buildings lined in the east district were forbidden to student entry. Now, inside the building it was engulfed in a tranquil quietness.

The corridors that were once overflowing with the faculty members and staff are now completely empty. Private rooms, large rooms one would believe were faculty rooms, they were all deserted. Everyone who was in there were all gathered in one place.

…. Meeting Room No. 13.

Located on the top floor, holding a capacity of 300 people, it was boasted as the largest in the school. Right now, the school's faculty members had gathered in that meeting room. It was at full capacity, no seats were available at the long table crammed with people.

However, it was strangely quiet.

Inside the meeting room only one person's voice could be heard.

The owner of that voice was…

Hope's Peak Academy's headmaster, Kirigiri Jin.

He was positioned at the front of the table, face to face with the

faculty members who had gathered, indifferently reading a document he held in his hands. Without even a glimpse of emotion, he read each word off the page with a straight face. No different to an audio recording. Nevertheless, this was an important duty for Kirigiri. It was his duty to communicate the decision to all the faculty members. No matter how little sense it seemed to make…. no, he had no time to harbour any doubts or hesitations to begin with. If he had the time he would be attending to a number of things.

"Are you telling us to cover it up?"

A voice suddenly echoed through the meeting room.

In response he raised his head to the sight of the 300 people opposite him.

They weren't glaring or judging him, it was more as if they were staring at him, feeling uncomfortable. With little defence he felt as though they were grabbing at him through their gazes, he had a bad feeling as all the hairs on Kirigiri's body stood on end.

As if trying to escape from their sight Kirigiri looked to the four people to the right of him.

They were sitting at the front of the same table, all their faces creased with wrinkles. With their eyes closed tightly, their wrinkles became increasingly noticeable. From Kirigiri's position, he could see they four's wrinkles blur together into one mass of wrinkles. The members of Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee's expression seemed to say they had already given up.

That's just like you… He unintentionally gave a bitter grin at the thought. Well, it's not like I hoped for anything better from you. He only muttered this quietly in thought so no one would hear, with that

Kirigiri redirected his gaze in front of him.

From this point onward he was going to use his own words, he had decided.

"First, allow me to say something" Kirigiri went to remind them, "This is a decision Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee had made earlier."

The air lowered in temperature… or perhaps it was his own body temperature rising. In any case, Kirigiri wet his mouth with the glass of water in his hand before continuing.

"We know this decision may be rather abnormal."

The mass of wrinkles, that is the 'we' he mentioned, did not move at all, as though they knew from the very start the attitude he would take to express his words.

"But, do not assume we are covering this up for any other reason. If possible I would be taking responsibility for this. But, a matter of this relevance cannot be taken care of that way. It would not help even if each and every one of us took responsibility. This is something that is on an entirely different level."

Kirigiri paused to sip the rest of his water.

"Make no mistake, I do not think our decision is a perfect one. If it were, that 'parade' wouldn't be happening."

Kirigiri gestured towards a curtained window, some people turn to look at the window bitterly.

"Instead that ‘parade’ has been increasing recently. Those people in it hate us… and I don’t think they’re wrong for doing so."

At that point Kirigiri slowly looked around the room at the faces of the faculty members, he communicated his meaning clearly through his expression to everyone.

"I do not think our philosophy of ‘the hope of all humanity’ is wrong. But if they were the learn of ‘that incident’, the meaning of that philosophy is as good as gone. That is a far too greater loss for mankind… neither the support association, nor the alumni want such a thing."

The support association and alumni…. the meeting room was filled with whispers.

"And that is why Hope’s Peak Academy’s Steering Committee’s four members and I have come to the conclusion that we should cover this up."

Kirigiri let his gaze wander to the old men again, they were as still as they were before. Leaving it entirely to him they remained silent and expressionless.

"As I have already said, we know that this decision is abnormal. But as the researchers and educators, it is our duty to protect talent. There is nothing more tragic than if hostility was directed towards those with talent. Also… we must remember one more thing."

The 300 man faculty patiently waited for Kirigiri's words.

"No matter how horrid the crimes committed were, it will not change the fact that student is a very 'special hope' we raised ourselves."

The stares of the faculty members changed.

However no one even murmured a whisper.

It was simply silent.

No one objected, what he said could not be countered.

Although his statement was perhaps narrow-minded, everyone had a similar view on the matter. They were all researchers but at the same time they were all teachers, and their students were theirs to study. They were all obsessed by that thing called talent.

If you weren't someone like that, you did not belong here.

That is why they listened to Kirigiri and made their decision.

For the idea they believed in, for the future they believed in, for the hope they believed in… they would conceal The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 3

A yellow cat peeked out from the bush beside the pavement.

The cat wobbly stepped out from the grass onto the road while it lazily moved it's tail and looked expectantly, if not thoughtfully at me. However, it's eyes were immediately cautious and they soon turned to fear. As I was skipping along the pavement, the cat assumed I was a threat and quickly retreated to the bush.

But such a thing didn't matter me, the sun's cheering light covered my body as my skirt fluttered, I continued lightly skipping.

I was in Hope's Peak Academy's east district, in the courtyard.

The area was filled with newly constructed buildings and facilities and even some buildings still in construction. I almost acted like a stitch between the lines of buildings.

Taking no notice of the muddy cat, or the classmates I passed. It had been a while since I last went out but it wasn't for fun, I skipped simply with a destination in mind.

But, you know, I'm not the kind of girl who blatantly skips without reason.

I have a very good reason for doing so.

It’s because I’m going to meet someone who I like almost unbearably~

That reason may or may not be a good one, though no student would casually skip around like I am. and several students I passed shot me strange glances.

But that doesn’t matter to me at all.

Girls crying, a lover’s quarrel, a person stuck in a wheelchair, not even a person falling from anemia could stop me from skipping.

I want to see the one I love and I want to see him soon, my body shivered at that thought. I skipped up the stairs, not caring whether my skirt flapped too much or not and continued to skip through the courtyard.

And I kept goi-

"….. Huh?"

At that point I suddenly stopped.

"Where was it I was going?"

I looked around and realised I didn’t recognise where I was. My heart thumped heavily.

It’s okay… I tried to calm myself, desperately. I took out a notebook from the backpack I was carrying, I looked at the last page of the notebook and read a sentence written there. “In the east district of Hope’s Peak Academy is the biology building. On the third floor is the Neuroscience Institute.”

I felt a refreshing breeze.

Right, right, it was the biology building!

… Huh? Where was the biology building again?

My heart thumped loudly again.

It’s fine, it’s fine… I hurriedly flipped through the notebook pages until my eyes located a crudely drawn map.

"This is Hope’s Peak Academy’s east district!"

So that’s where I am!

I punched the air in an unintentional pose!

I quickly jumped onto the fountain in the middle of the courtyard and compared the buildings I saw to the ones I saw on the map. There are… literature, science, physics, art, health, language and faculty buildings.

My thigh was getting wet from the stray droplets of the fountain, I was looking desperately for the biology building as if it were my first time visiting.

"I-I wonder if that's it…"

I saw a square building with a distinctive light green colouring. It seemed to line up with what I had drawn in my notebook.

"Alright!"

I jumped from the fountain and ran to the building. Some of the boys nearby looked surprised. I wonder if my skirt flew up a little too much while jumping off the fountain…

that doesn't matter right now.

In any case I, though I don't remember it, have arrived at my destination.

I ran to the biology building in an incredibly fast dash, at the back of the lobby I found the stairs. I skipped up the three flights of stairs and finally arrived on the third floor. As I ran along the corridor I confirmed where I was by checking the plates on top of the doors. At the end of the corridor I came to a plate reading "Neuroscience Institute".

I quickly stopped.

I took a deep breath and checked my hair and smile in my hand mirror.

… Yup, cute as always!

I kept my smile to max. “Hellooooo” I entered the laboratory with a bright, full voice…. and then it happened.

Whoosh, the sound of air being cut through ran past my ear.

"…..huh?"

In retrospect I said that rather meekly. I turned around swallowing a panicked feeling and saw a knife stuck in the wall next to me. I let out a yelp and jumped back. “W-Why was there a knife thrown at me?!”

There was a chiding voice from inside the room. “Shut up.”

I heard that voice and my heart leapt.

While my heart was pounding I looked to find the source of the voice, a man lying on a bed in the middle of the room.

"….. You’re late. Even for someone as ugly as you."

He dressed sloppily wearing a dirty white shirt. He doesn’t even so much as glance away from the manga he’s holding above him.

"For someone so ugly, you sure are loud. Come to think of it, acting so

scared over a little scalpel is also kind of weird."

"W-Wait a moment!" I interrupted him hurriedly. "It's discriminatory to keep calling me ugly!"

"And who are you gonna report me to? The Japanese Association of Ugly People? That kind of place is discrimination just by existing."

He kept looking at his manga while continuing his ugly attack. The one who's in charge of the Neuroscience Institute, the one who's in charge of my treatment, and my childhood friend is the one that I like unbearably much.

This is the "Super High School Level Neurologist", Matsuda Yasuke…. probably.

"Ah, I get it. You're a member of that weird association, right? Is that why you're so angry?"

"N-No I'm not! And I'm not ugly!"

"Is that right? I guess you aren't ugly after all."

I puffed out my chest, grinning, "Yeah, yeah, I know. I checked in my hand mirror just a minute ago an-"

"I meant to say you're super ugly."

"Super ugly!"

I was very shocked and couldn’t even think of a response.

"D-Don’t lie! I’m not ugly! I’m cuter than most people in this world!"

But, no matter how much I fussed, Matsuda-kun never let his eyes leave the manga book and he replied,

"I know what the world says. But I reserve judgement to myself so I can say you’re ugly."

He passed off my arguments as if they were nothing more than the wind.

"Well then, tell me which part of me is ugly! Tell me which clinic I can get my ugliness fixed from!" I cried out in desperation, "Is it my eyes? Or my mouth? What about my voice?"

"Your heart mostly."

"I can’t get my heart fixed at a clinic!"

"Oh really? What a poor, unfortunate thing. Your face is bad and so is your personality, there’s no salvation for someone as ugly as you. Perhaps you should use your ugliness as the object of sympathy? I’m sure if you stand in front of a train station with a donation box you’ll earn at least a little."

My shoulders drooped as I became disappointed. With that disappointment I let my hands relax in a limp state and they hung by my sides.

"….In any case, who are you?

"Eh?"

I found his words surprising and looked up at him.

"I've only heard your voice, so I don't know who you are yet."

"You were talking to me this entire time and you didn't know who I was?"

"You still haven't said your name or anything informative, that's pretty rude."

"My name or anythi…. Look at me! Look, it's me!"

"No, don't have time to look." Matsuda-kun said while indulged reading his manga, "I'm reading."

"Don't have time… It's just a manga!"

"If you asked me "If you had to choose between the manga and me, who would it be?" I'd still be listening to you. But as far as looking, I'd choose the manga any day."

"I see, so no matter when I came here, your manga would still be more important-That's too cruel! I didn't want to be told that!"

"It's better if you just tell me who you are quickly."

"I-I get it…"

I took my notebook out of my backpack and read the cover. "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook".

As I read it I remembered.

I remembered my name.

"Um, it seems my name is Otonashi Ryouko…. maybe?"

"You can't even remember your own name? There's only one person I know who's that stupid."

Matsuda-kun let out a sigh.

"Well then, at least you're not a suspicious person."

"…. Could it be, you threw that blade at me earlier mistaking me for a suspicious person… ? Is that what you're saying….?"

"That’s right, I’m not the kind of guy who throws blades at people I know."

"That’s an absolute lie!!" I pointed my finger at Matsuda-kun, "Before even checking to see who I was you said things like "You’re late for being ugly" or "For an ugly person, you’re really loud"! You should have realised who I was!"

Thump….

That was the sound made when Matsuda-kun closed his manga finally. He bounced up from the bed with the help of the cushion and he determinedly walked towards me looking me straight in the eyes.

"Huh? What? W-What’s wrong… ?"

I stared at him and I felt a hot feeling all over my body.

"… You, did you remember that?"

"… Huh?"

Matsuda-kun gripped my shoulders firmly. He looked me dead straight in the face and slowly grew closer. In a harsh tone of voice he said “Do you remember me calling you ugly when you walked in?”

I forced myself to stare Matsuda-kun in the face. My chest was

pounding and my heartbeat sky-rocketed.

"Um, well… it seems like that. Maybe I'm getting better?"

I answered and felt myself start to turn an embarrassing shade of pink. He released my shoulders and turned away from me.

With his back turned from me, I heard him mutter under his breath, "Is it really better? Or has it worsened?"

"… Huh? What has?"

"Don't worry, it's nothing."

Matsuda-kun shook his head and said in a commanding tone of voice, "Right, get on the bed. Better get this over with quickly."

My heart still pounding faintly, I put down my backpack and laid down on the bed Matsuda-kun was sleeping on just a short time ago. I felt my body on the soft sheets and smelled his scent, letting it tickle my nostrils. It's definitely Matsuda-kun's scent. I smelled it as I laid on the bed, and felt his body temperature.I felt happy, this was a feeling similar to him hugging me…

"Eheeheeheeheeheehee" I let out an interesting laugh, "Eheeheeheeheehee."

"Hey, are you…. laughing… ?"

Matsuda-kun stared at me frowning.

"You sound like a stupid bug with the way you're laughing and you look like one too, that's too gross. Can't you try laughing at least a little more ordinarily?"

"Ahyohyohyohyohyo"

"How is that normal? If anything that's even more gross."

Matsuda-kun pulled out a rattling trolly from the corner of the room. Somehow balancing on top of the trolly was a complex machine that looked very important.

Matsuda-kun pulled the trolly alongside the bed and with a brief "Let's begin." He gazed firmly at the machine as he started operating it.

Before I knew it, I was staring at Matsuda-kun.

He had soft, smooth hair, and narrow eyes peeping out from behind it. Girlishly long eyelashes, and a pointed chin. Thin, small lips and slender white fingers.

"Gross, stop looking at me, super-ugly."

And a sharp tongue.

That’s right, that’s Matsuda-kun. I continued lying down and started to write something in my notebook.

"You don’t have to write everything in your notebook, garbage."

"But if I don’t write it down, I won’t remember it."

As I said that, Matsuda-kun let out a long sigh.

"… Honestly, your head is like a bottomless pit."

A bottomless pit? What an awful thing to say, but I suppose it is the case. Everything I see and hear, even if it’s something awful, I forget it in an instant. I don’t know why.

I don’t remember a single thing.

No matter what it is, my forgetfulness can’t be considered normal, that’s for sure.

"But you know, it’s not like I forget because I want to. I mean, there’s a mental illness or something, isn’t there? It can’t really be helped. So be a bit nicer!"

"No, well we can’t pinpoint the disease." Matsuda-kun shook his head slightly. "A human brain, like yours or mine, is very complex and we still don’t know everything about it. It’s almost like a black box.

That’s why we can’t just cure this disease."

He stuck suction pad onto my face and arms while continuing to talk.

"There’s a part of the human brain we call "Episodic Memory". It records personal experiences and events. Then, the part that creates new memories for the episodic memory is the hippocampus. If the hippocampus is damaged or functioning abnormally, your brain can’t create any more episodic memories. There’s one case in particular that can be used as an example, there was a man who had a medical procedure to have his hippocampus removed. The story goes that after it happened, he lost the ability to create and store new memories. Since that incident, it’s been found that the hippocampus is extremely important to form new memories. However, even if the hippocampus is damaged, it is still possible to create "Procedural Memory", like how to use a tool or how to ride a bike. Of course, you would not actually remember learning how to do it. In short, you would still remember how to ride a bike, even if not being able to remember how you learnt to ride one… that’s more or less the concept."

"I see… so even though I’m forgetful, I never forget to read and write things in my

notebook." I raised the notebook in question, and nodded with a quick "yes, yes".

Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook

This notebook itself acts as my memory. It’s the one thing I can trust absolutely with everything. That is to say, with this notebook, I can live a more or less normal day-to-day life.

That being said, there are still many things that challenge my lack of

memory in this school. For instance, while in school tests I can't review my notes, and as a result of my bad grades, I've been suspended from sch-

"Huh? I've been suspended from school!?" I unintentionally yelled at my notebook, "My grades have been that bad? That's awful!"

"Just be thankful you haven't been kicked out all together. I had to talk to the school officials just to stop them from doing that."

"Huh? You stood up for me?" My chest tightened in delight, "I'm so happy! Ehehe, you did such a kind thing for me!"

Matsuda-kun only scoffed at my comment.

"….. I just couldn't risk having my precious research taken from me."

Even so, Matsuda-kun had taken the time to do such a nice thing!

"In your case, your brain doesn't seem to be able to retrieve long term memories.

Perhaps the synaptic connections joining your brains neurons have been damaged. I can't know for sure until I examine them in more detail."

"I don't really understand what that means… but I'm just glad I haven't been kicked out! If I had been expelled I would have been forced to live on the roadside!"

I don’t really have anywhere to go besides this school. I forgot everything else. I don’t remember my family or anything.

"And also, it means we wouldn’t get to spend any more time together if I dropped out."

Being apart from Matsuda-kun… To me, that was unbelievably scary. I trembled a little just saying it.

"Don’t worry about such a stupid little thing."

Matsuda-kun put it bluntly.

"You’re extremely good research material that I’m not willing to let go of so easily… for now."

"But… that’s just for now!"

I guess I’m happy, but I need to make sure I don’t cause any trouble.

"Stop complaining. You should be honoured you’re such important research." Then he said in a condescending manner. "In order to understand what triggers amnesia, we need to find the molecular mechanism that it’s connected to. Once we find that, our understanding of memory will improve a tenfold. We’ll even be able to create medications to improve memory. Then, maybe in the future, we’ll be able to even store backups of our memories on hard drives… if it’s possible to create that sort of system. Actually, there are studies delving into that currently in foreign countries. By suppressing Protein kinase M zeta, it’s been found it’s possible to erase a lab rat’s long term memory."

"I see, I see!"

I didn't really understood, but I raised my voice so it sounded like I did.

"In any case, I'm super happy I can help my beloved Matsuda-kun!"

"A girl with such a hollow mind is going to say hollow things. You really are a hollow girl in the end."

I worried since I was so idiotic. I didn't understand what he meant at all. But, that's Matsuda-kun for you.

Matsuda-kun insisted I take care of myself, though I oppose him on that. He always put things very harshly and curtly, not bothering to be delicate with someone like me. But then again, it was troublesome when people would always act sympathetic to me, so in the end Matsuda-kun spoke to me with just right attitude.

"Well, even if I'm hollow, I'm still super happy! Because I'm helping my dearest Matsuda-kun, whom I love so much!"

Not at all discouraged by his words I yelled out that, and he muttered something in return.

"Well, you are certainly helpful… since you're such a rare case…"

"You said rare! That makes it sound so special!!" I was happy to be given such praise. "… Hey, you said rare, so what's rare about it?

Hey, tell me! Heeeey, heeeeeey, tell me, tell me!"

"Heeeey, heeeeeeey, shut up." Matsuda-kun spat out while releasing another sigh, "I guess I won't tell you now, since you're getting too excited for your own good."

"It's fine, It's fine! Tell me, tell me, tell me!"

My efforts paid off and Matsuda-kun finally told me.

"It's just strange that someone with such brain intensive talent has ended up with memory loss, that's what I meant."

"… Talent? Brain intensive?"

I thought about it briefly and couldn't think of what he was talking about.

"It's fine if you've forgotten… I hate it when you use that talent of yours on me. To be truthful, I'd prefer it if you never used it on me. Got it, you stupid bug?"

I didn't really understand but hey, he insulted me! I know I caught that much!

"Well, I don't mind if I don't remember, I get to spend all these intimate moments with Matsuda-kun and so I'm kind of glad I have this illness!"

"I already explained, it’s not an illness."

Matsuda-kun hid the grin on my face by placing more suction pads on my face.

"But, I have to admire that carefree attitude of yours. Even in such a serious predicament, you still laugh and smile. Shouldn’t you be worrying?"

"…. Eh? Why would I be worrying?"

"Well, you know," Matsuda-kun said with a surprised expression, "You don’t seem to care at all about what I’ve been telling you. For instance, whether your symptoms will ever be cured… or whether you’ll always be like this."

"……. Eh?"

I made a shocked face. There was something funny about what Matsuda-kun was asking me.

"Ahahaha, not at all!"

And so I laughed.

"So what if I only remember things around me right now? It’s not like I can remember having a good memory, so I have nothing to really compare myself to. So I don’t think this "forgetfulness" is really such a drawback. That’s more or less…. what I’ve been thinking."

"Your memory loss isn't a disadvantage… ? But aren't you worried at all about when it began? Or when it'll end?"

"Hmmm, I don't really care. I mean, once I'm cured the treatment will be over. But when that happens I won't be able to meet with you anymore, that's the only thing I'm worried about."

After I said that, there was a strange silence.

The silence continued for a while until Matsuda sighed and muttered,

"You should worry."

His voice was low and depressing.

"What if you'll always be like this……."

"Huh…… ?"

He suddenly looked up, his face peeking out from behind his dark hair. He looked stiff, deep in thought.

"Matsuda-kun?"

He reacted finally when I called his name.

"No, it’s nothing… " He looked as though he was trying to figure out something in his mind. He waved his hand to imply that is really was nothing to fuss over. "It’s really best that you don’t get too depressed over your symptoms. It’s good that you’re so carefree over it."

"Well, my mind is flexible after all!"

"Yeah, I’d definitely say flexible. Given that you’ve forgotten your family and friends, and everything about yourself from before your amnesia struck."

"Like I said, I don’t mind forgetting any of those things as long as I’m with you. Since I’ve forgotten about being with anyone else, I figure they just have nothing to do with me anymore."

"Those words again." Matsuda-kun said while taking a brief moment to blink. "If you keep saying they have "nothing to do with you" then aren’t you afraid you’ll end up no longer being you?"

"It’s fine, since I’m with you!" I answered him cheerfully, full of confidence. "Since you’re the only person I really remember, as long as I’m with you I’ll never be alone."

"No, you only remember me because I’m part of the "treatment" and your "procedural memory". That’s the only reason."

"You said I’m wrong, but I don’t think I am."

"Ah, I get it." Matsuda-kun said, trying to get me to quieten down. He

continued attaching the suction pads pausing briefly to scratch at his chest through the gap between the buttons on his dirty shirt. Did he really understand what I was trying to say? He was probably just tired of dealing with me. Maybe he didn't believe me when I said I "remembered" him.

But I do.

Certainly, what I call "remembering" is probably a little different to what a normal person would. But I was telling the truth.

I remember Matsuda-kun.

I've forgotten him, but I still remember him.

I don't remember any of our conversations or what we've done together. But that doesn't mean I don't remember him. Those kinds of things are best left in my notebook. What I remember is something more important and special. What I remember is a feeling, rather than a memory.

It's not something I remember in my head, nor something in my mind. What I remember are "feelings" for Matsuda-kun. But when I do see him I remember the feelings I have in my heart, and it feels like it's trying to tell me he's something important. He is absolutely irreplaceable to me.

So, no matter how forgetful I become, I'll never forget Matsuda-kun. The connection between Matsuda-kun and I are more than just memories. In short, the bond we share is a miracle, and-

"Would you shut up already?"

"Eh?"

My mind quickly returned to the real world.

"H-How could you hear my thoughts?"

I was about to jump away but Matsuda pinned down my head.

"If you move around too much the cords will come off, what a waste of human life." He said those harsh words as though he thought I really meant to pull off the cords.

"But I wasn't even talking aloud… Ah, you told me to shut up, is it possible you were telling me pounding heart to shut up? That's impossible, impossible, impossible! If it stopped beating, I'd die!"

"I was talking about outside."

"Huh? Outside?"

Matsuda-kun raised his chin and pointed to the window. As I listened, I could hear a variety of strange noises coming from the other side of the window. Jeers, roars, hooting, accusations and repulsion all combined to make something that sounded almost as if the earth was tremoring. It was a collection of harsh, hate filled voices.

"…. What is that?"

"It’s the "parade". Honestly, it’s been growing louder and louder every day."

"Parade, you don’t mean THAT parade, do you?!”

"Bull shit. You don’t even remember what I’m talking about." Matsuda-kun hit my forehead, then he put on a serious expression and continued with his explanation. "To be straight, it’s a demonstration. The faculty though, or rather, those idiots from the steering committee decided it would be better to give it a ridiculous name like "parade"."

"… But a parade isn’t really a demonstration, is it?"

"That’s exactly the point."

"Although, a demo isn’t really… it’s not shocking!"

Matsuda-kun decided to just ignore me.

"It’s the people from the preparatory school."

"The preparatory school?" I don’t think I’ve heard of it before, have I?

”You really don’t remember after all. Well, it can’t be helped for someone with such a large head like yourself.”

"Wait! It’s sexual harassment to call a girl’s head large! You’re like someone straight from the edo er-Oof" Matsuda-kun pushed me down by my head just as I was about to stand again.

"Firstly, Hope’s Peak Academy isn’t an institute purely for teaching, unlike other schools. Here, talent isn’t only taught, but it’s also researched. It’s the same for the teachers, they’re not only hear for teaching but also they’re here as scientists. But scientists are nasty things. They tried to advance their research more, but there was something they were lacking… do you know what it was?"

"Um… it was probably…"

"Funds."

"Ah, that’s it!" I was disappointed I lost my chance to answer and ended up only saying a little.

"Up until now, Hope’s Peak Academy gained it’s funds from government grants and donations from the school’s alumni. But many felt as though the school was not receiving enough funding, and their research was slowed. The steering committee was obviously disappointed. Thus, in order to further pursue talent, they created a preliminary system."

Hm, hm, I nodded my head and hummed in agreement.

"The point is, there’s us, the "super high school levels", or the regular students, and then there are the reserve students. We’re all situated in the east district while they’re all in the west, so we don’t know much about each other, but… what I do know is they seem to be completely

different to us. Firstly, they don't seem to be scouted out, and they have to sit through a normal high school entrance exam. Secondly, our school teachers are scientists who live at the school, while they bring the preparatory school teachers from outside."

"So then, it's just a normal high school?"

"Yeah, that's right. But even so, the school was flooded with applicants from students. Brand power really is something." Matsuda-kun spat those words. "That said, as far as the public were concerned, this private school which up until now had only scouted it's students had opened it's doors for everyone. Of course people would flock to such a brand name. Also, this place was able to collect money by people paying with an arm and leg just to get in. So, this place has become much more crowded recently. Of course, the school grounds have widened a fair bit and much to the envy of many experts, we've built more top of the range facilities, one after the other. This school has rapidly grown in size. It's just, no one would have thought Hope's Peak Academy would have changed so dramatically in size in just two years, and that's the story about the power of the steering committee."

"But isn't that kind of a rip off?"

"It seems like it, but it's just the kind of world we live in." Matsuda-kun distorted his face into a bitter smile, and then he continued. "Right now, Hope's Peak Academy is set up in a pyramid sort of idea that a third world country would use, it's only really there to concentrate it's effort on the "super high school levels", for their benefit, and then below them are the reserve students from the preparatory school. Apparently it's possible to move up from the preparatory school to the regular school… but it's questionable as to whether anyone has actually managed it. The teachers here don't really think any of the reserve students really belong here."

"Huuuuh, they shouldn't be teacheeeeers"

"Well they are teachers, but more importantly they're scientists, and they're not interested in those students. That's what is seems like to me. They have their eyes set on the "talent of humanity"."

"But that's totally unfair!" As I said that, I puffed out my cheeks without thinking.

"Of course it's unfair. If it wasn't, that demonstration wouldn't be happening. But, having said that…" Matsuda-kun cut off there and changed his tone of voice, "I don't think it was them who planned this. It's more likely someone else's plot… I feel like that must be it."

"Eh…… ?"

Matsuda-kun narrowed his eyes towards the window. The roughness from his glare caused me to hesitate to say anything.

"Oy, ugly." After a while Matsuda-kun said something after remembering, "Make sure you write down some of our conversation in that notebook of yours. You can't just brush it off as "it's not my problem." Those reserve students don't seem to be very interested in us. Well, I don't think they'd attack you or anything… but it pays to be careful."

"Right, got it." I replied. I noticed my face was so covered in suction pads that I could barely move my mouth.

"I'm going out for a while. You can sleep if you want." Matsuda-kun only said that and started to walk away from me.

"But, I'm not sleepy at all…. " My voice filled with anxiety and just

outside of my peripheral vision I could hear Matsuda-kun answer.

"In that case why don't I give you some sleeping pills? Say, around a dozen?"

"… Eh? Wouldn't that be a lethal dose? Is that really okay… ?" I could feel myself grow increasingly worried until Matsuda-kun came back. On top of his stained, white shirt, he was now wearing a school jacket.

"Don't you dare touch any of my machines while I'm gone, or I'll kill you."

"So where are you going?"

"Just on a few small errands. In any case, don't you dare touch any of my machines while I'm gone, or I'll kill you" I could tell he was being serious, because he repeated it.

"But, I wouldn't mind if it was Matsuda-kun who killed me."

"I don't want to. That's too grotesque for me." Not as grotesque as someone who spends all day studying the human brain, of course I wouldn't say that out loud to him. "Ah, so! When you've come back from running those errands, let's watch a movie together!"

"…. a movie?"

"Um, yeah… what was it called again… ?" I flipped through my

notebook to see if it contained any memories of any movies. "Ah, this is it! Let's see, it takes place at the McCallister house hold where two robbers, Harry and Marv tr-"

"You don't mean Home Alone, do you? It's no surprise you've already forgotten, but you bugged me about this movie before, a lot, so we've already seen it."

"Oh, have we? Um, well then… " I flipped through my notebook again looking for memories of other movies I wanted to see, but Home Alone was the only one written down. It's just his own fault for letting me watch it. "Well, I'm sure it was a masterpiece! It'd definitely be interesting to watch again!"

"It certainly wasn't a bad movie, but I don't think it's something I would normally watch again."

"Normal? Did you say normal? Then what would you norma-"

"Stop asking me stuff that sounds like it came out of a junior high school girl's diary." He looked at me with disgust. But I was determined not to give up.

"That's fine! I've got a feeling that it'll be just as interesting to watch it a second time!" Then I flipped through my notebook quickly again, "Ah! According to what I wrote down, the star, Wacoal Culkin, is super cute! He's cute! Isn't that great?"

"Why would I think that's great? Anyway, his name is Macaulay Culkin, Wacoal are women's underwear."

"Ahaha! It says here that he's ultra cute and I wanted to adopt him for my own!"

"But you don't know what Culkin-kun looks like now. You sound like a pervert."

"A-A pervert…." I was beaten down by his sharp tongue. Matsuda-kun narrowed his eyes more while sweeping his bangs away from his face.

"It's fine, just shut up and go to sleep already." Apparently, it seemed like he was done talking to me.

"Wait! Don't go!" I said desperately trying to stop him, "I don't want you to! No, no no! I'll be lonely if you go! It's been such a long time since we last met up and I'll be lonely when you leave!"

"….. A long time?" Matsuda-kun stopped suddenly in mid stride, "Why do you think it's been a long time since we last met up?"

"……. Eh?"

"I asked you why do you think it's been a long time since we last saw each other…" With his back turned his voice sounded like he was pushing back a painful feeling, having heard that I was only confused.

"Um… well, because… because I can feel my heart thumping…. " That was the excuse I used.

"So, your heart wouldn't be pounding so loudly if we saw each other

every day?"

".. Uh, no, that's not it! That's not what I meant…"

"Anyway, we saw each other yesterday."

"…. Eh? Really?"

"Just as I thought, your memory isn't getting any better…. " Matsuda-kun slackened his posture, looking disappointed, "So then, you lied about being able to remember me too… "

"W-Wait a second! Don't jump to conclusions!" I hurriedly flipped through my notebook from start to end, but I didn't find any mention of meeting with Matsuda-kun yesterday. I looked up again but couldn't see Matsuda-kun anywhere.

"…. tch!" He won. Well there's nothing more I can do. Aaah, Jeez, I guess I have to sleep then. Well, there's nothing wrong with that. At least if I sleep I can immerse myself in my dreams, away from this lonely place without Matsuda-kun and into my dreams of him. Feeling such hope in my chest, I moved onto my side, being careful not to remove any of the suction pads on my face, and I smelt Matsuda-kun's scent on the pillow, as if I were a puppy. "Hohoho" I pressed my cheek against the pillow, "Hohoho, Matsuda-kun's scent" Then I closed my eyes.

My vision blacked out and my other senses sharpened. Soon my entire world was filled with the smell of Matsuda-kun.

No, that's not all. I could hear a voice somewhere, like it came

tumbling into the world of Matsuda-kun and me. It was… a lot of voices, overflowing with hate. They pounded in my ear and filled me with uncertainty. I quickly tried to block them out.

… It's not my problem.

But I think I've forgotten how to fall asleep, I can't go to sleep quite yet, but I want to soon. If I fall asleep I can go over to the world where Matsuda-kun is. I want to see

Matsuda-kun again.

Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun.

As I thought more about seeing Matsuda-kun in my dreams, I slowly, peacefully fell asleep.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 4

10 minutes after Matsuda Yasuke left the lab.

He had arrived at a building with a door that practically oozed a grave atmosphere. He felt tense. He wanted to tell himself off for having such a stupid response, but at the same time he understood why he felt like that. It was the first time he had entered the faculty building. This place was, so to say, Hope's Peak Academy's centre. Although the facilities for the regular students were in the east district, this was the only place they were forbidden from entering. On his way here he had to explain himself many times to the faculty teachers who stopped him. Inside the faculty building there was an especially special place.

Matsuda Yasuke raised his head and his eyes met the door to the room.

The wooden doors were immensely decorated. It overflowed with a feeling that no one was allowed to enter them. The plate on the door read, "Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee Room". It was as if this was the very centre of the building in the centre of Hope's Peak Academy. This room was a special place where students and even staff rarely entered. This was the only place no one could even possibly talk about without feeling nervous. But anyway…

"… Pull yourself together." Matsuda quietly cleared his throat.

The atmosphere was so intense it was almost impossible to muster up any courage. He held fist up and knocked on the door two times.

"Batch 77 of Hope's Peak Academy, I'm Matsuda Yasuke." He slowly

opened the heavy door. "… Excuse me"

The atmosphere in this room was clearly different to any classroom on campus. The ceiling, pillars and walls were all extravagantly decorated, and gave a very heavy, dignified impression. Matsuda took a step forward, his footsteps were absorbed by the carpet.

"We are sorry for calling you all the way here." There was an unexpectedly light voice. It was the voice of Hope's Peak Academy's headmaster, Kirigiri Jin. No matter how many times Matsuda sees him, he always thinks the same thing. That guy really is young.

When Matsuda thought of principles, he would imagine an old man with a grey moustache, wearing a plain suit. So, Kirigiri Jin, despite being in his thirties, looked younger.

"In any case, please take a seat. We don't expect you to stand while talking."

In the centre of the room was a large, circular table, around it were several antique chairs.

"Excuse me." Matsuda sat on the chair closest to him, it was directly opposite to Kirigiri's seat.

The moment he sat down, he could feel the gaze of several people on him. Around the circular table sat four older men, each spaced at regular intervals, all staring at Matsuda. They all dressed in jet black suits and ties, as if attending a funeral. Matsuda felt them evaluating him, as discomfort flooded his breathe.

"Do you know who we are?" One of the old men began, his voice was grainy.

"You're the steering committee, aren't you?"

"We seem to be indebted to you for your help over "that incident"."

"….. What do you mean?" The wrinkles on the old men deepened at Matsuda's response. They seemed annoyed that he avoided the topic.

"You don't need to be so cautious. We know everything about it." Another of the old men spoke out. "We know you're the one who helped us interrogate the student who was first to discover the scene."

The first to discover… as soon as Matsuda heard those words, his heart begun thumping. After hearing that he immediately replied.

"…. Are you asking me to interrogate them again?"

"No." Another old man said, shaking his head. "We wish to investigate another student.

However, there is a problem. Thankfully, this problem is exactly in your field of expertise. That's why we want your help."

Judging from what they said they had already decided. There was that kind of feeling in the air.

"….. What if I refuse?" There was a silence. One of the old men laughed. Quietly at first, but it slowly grew louder. Soon the other's joined in… 2 people, 3 people, they were all laughing now. The laughter seemed to ridicule him, echoing throughout the whole room

and stabbing him from all directions.

"Oy, Matsuda-kun…. " Suddenly the laughter stopped. "Do you think you really have a choice?" The voice was filled with a condescending tone. "That patient you're treating… despite her absence from school her health doesn't seemed to have improved at all."

Matsuda frowned.

"… What are you saying?"

"You're still a student. We'd rather not have you wasting time on a child that has no chance of being cured." Those words filled with cynicism floated around the room. "That is to say, we can't really afford to continue housing a student that will most likely not be returning to classes. This is a place to nurture talent. Those idiots who aren't up to it should just leave. But, that being said, if you agree-"

"Shut the fuck up, old man!"

"… Wha?"

"Blah blah blah, you're only spouting fucking nonsense." Quickly the atmosphere of the room changed, and the tension rose.

"… W-why you insolen"

Matsuda stood up and the old man froze. He stared at all of the older men-No, there was a lot of anger and contempt put into it, so it was more of a glare. It was the look you gave an insect when stomping on it.

"…. Drop out? Idiot? Let me tell you one thing, I'm the only one who can call her those thing!"

"… Y-You should le-"

"I said shut the fuck up." Matsuda easily quietened the men by saying that and then he continued in a soft voice. "People might call her an idiot, but she doesn't even bother to stick up for herself, thinking she can't do it. So I don't think I'd be able to forgive myself if I don't do it for her."

He looked at the steering committee, the atmosphere wasn't really macabre or anything, it was just intimidating. How was someone who was still only a teenager able to control a situation with such ease? No, they should have already known the answer to that.

It was the power of talent, and it was the power of Hope's Peak Academy's hope.

"… Ah, may I say something?" A new voice cut in. It belonged to Kirigiri. Matsuda redirected his gaze to him. "It's just that I would like to contribute a little to this conversation…. "

Kirigiri put on a wry smile and scratched his head. His attitude seemed very laid back and relaxed. His momentum shattered, Matsuda slowly closed his eyes, let out a large sigh and sat down again. Having watched Matsuda do so, Kirigiri continued in a calm voice.

"Matsuda-kun, this is only a request. However, this isn't just us asking this, this is all of Hope's Peak Academy. The thing is, we'd like you to listen what we are telling you and help us."

Matsuda stared at Kirigiri in silence, still trying to weigh what he was saying. Kirigiri glanced at Matsuda and went on.

"This is just a rumour but… having heard it I think it may be more." After having covered that he delved into the main issue. "After all this time, I do not think it is necessary to explain what "that incident" is. But it may be good to start from there to refresh your memory."

He cleared his throat and raised his hands so they were in front of his chest. He glanced at all the people in the room and continued.

"I can't believe it's already been a month since it happened. Since such an appalling incident occurred at this school. It already seems like nothing more than a bad dream."

"But it really happened!" One of the old men yelled out, interrupting him.

"Thirteen people!" Another shouted. "Thirteen victims and we still know little to nothing about what happened! How could this have happened at our school!"

Now that their voices had subsided, there was something Matsuda wanted to confirm.

"… So then, you still haven't contacted the police?"

"Of course not! What would happen if we did contact them? How would that solve anything? This isn't simply a matter of catching the

culprit!"

"But… what about the relatives of the victims?"

"That doesn't matter!" An old man interrupted, "You don't need to worry about that!"

Judging from what they were saying, it seems there was a lot of things already happening behind the scenes. They must have been asking a lot of graduates in high places to pull some strings. For a place like Hope's Peak Academy, of course they'd have many powerful connections. But, if a place like Hope's Peak Academy fell, it would be bad for mankind.

"Fine, I won't worry about it. So then, what was it you wanted me to do? You said something about "another person" you needed my help with."

"We need you to help us extract information from that person to help us clarify the truth behind "that incident"." Kirigiri replied.

"You say clarify the truth, but aren't you trying to cover it up? Isn't that just a contradiction?"

Covering it up. Matsuda was the only student to have been told of that. He promised to cooperate with the school, if he was given better facilities and equipment. In that sense, he was just another scientist.

But, that's not the real reason why he's cooperating. But no one besides Matsuda knew that.

"Indeed, it certainly sounds like a contradiction." Kirigiri replied after some hesitation.

"However, I believe it is a necessity, if we wish to thoroughly hide "that incident".

There's still too many things we do not yet know. We cannot hide something we do not fully understand. So, first we need to discover the full picture behind "that incident". We must completely cover it up, for Hope's Peak Academy's sake."

As he said that, Kirigiri's gaze did not stray.

We need to do anything we can to protect Hope's Peak Academy… together. You have to sacrifice something in order to protect something. Though, we're not entirely working together.

That's what Matsuda thought.

"….. So then, who is it? This student you want me to interrogate."

Kirigiri wet his lips and answered Matsuda carefully.

"We did not mention this to you before but… in addition to the person you knew of who discovered the scene of "that incident", there were two survivors."

Two survivors… that's the first Matsuda had heard of them.

"Of course, we are certain they have some information on the incident in question. We would have questioned them immediately after the incident to hear their story but we were unable to due to some circumstances beyond our control."

"… Circumstances?"

"One of the students never recovered consciousness and is still in comatose. The other student is fortunately unhurt… but went missing. Their whereabouts are still unknown."

One in comatose, and the other is missing. In that case it's impossible to question either of them. But, there's still some possibility…

"To summarise, you're asking me if I can learn anything from the student currently in comatose?"

Kirigiri nodded his head, "Yes."

Learning the truth in order to hide it. It feels like there's something distorted in that line of thought. But, in the end this request was convenient for Matsuda.

This might be your chance.

This might be your chance to protect her.

"…. Understood." Matsuda finally answered.

"… Please do what you can."

"Can you manage it?" One of the old men had shot up out of his chair quickly and was leaning forward with momentum.

"I can't say for sure yet. It depends on what they're like. But I will do my best either way." Matsuda replied bluntly and returned his gaze to Kirigiri.

He had one more thing he wanted to ask him.

"What will you do about the missing person? I'm sure you don't plan to just let them roam freely."

After a short silence, Kirigiri leaned forward and watched him.

"… Is there something you're worried about?"

Kirigiri narrowed his gaze into a glare and Matsuda found himself desperately wanting to look away.

"No, I was just curious." Anxiety filled his voice, he tried to hide it though. "But isn't it suspicious, going missing? I mean, what if he's the murderer. The person who's in a coma couldn't have done it… that's just what I was thinking."

At that moment, the steering committee begun to mutter to themelves. However, Kirigiri kept his composure.

"Indeed, it is certainly suspicious they went missing in such circumstances."

"That's why-"

"That's why what?" Kirigiri forcefully cut off Matsuda's words. "If we do not uncover the truth behind "that incident" it will be the end for this school."

The end? His choice of words caught Matsuda's attention.

Perhaps there was something special about that student. One student's name in particular wandered into Matsuda's head. It was a name he had only heard in rumour.

Up until now he had only thought it was an urban legend or something out of an occult.

But if that person really exists, then surely they have something to do with this.

If that's the case, it makes more sense.

It makes more sense to refer it as "The Worst, Largest Incident in

Hope’s Peak Academy’s History”.

This could reasonably be called the worst.

As that thought came to mind, a drop of sweat ran down Matsuda’s forehead.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 5

Ahhhhh…..

ZZZ…

Zzz zzZZzz zz ZzzZ … ZZZAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

I felt something pulling at the skin on my face very hard, it hurt so much I jumped to my feet. Next to the bed I was on, there was a man holding the suctions pads and cords that were on my face. My heart was pounding.

"Ah! Matsuda-kun? You're Matsuda-kun right?"

As I said that I ran towards him, and as if he were a bullfighter he easily dodged me. It was like I was the the coyote being tricked by the road runner, I crashed into the wall and saw stars.

"Ugh… W-Why'd you dodge me… ?"

"Because your face is disgusting."

"T-that… to call a pure maiden's face disgusting… " I lightly walked to the desk to look at the mirror on it. There were disgusting violet spots the size of 10 yen coins spotted all over my face. "… It's your fault for pulling off all the suction pads so violently!"

"I was in a hurry so I had to."

"I wouldn't mind, even if you wet your pants in front of me."

"… I didn't mean I needed to hurry to the toilet."

"I knew it! Matsuda-kun isn't a toilet after all!"

"What the hell kind of weird fantasies have you been having about me, super ugly?"

"Of course, since the beginning of recorded history, there have been few wiser statements, right?"

"You need to stop including me in your weird fantasies." Matsuda-kun breathed out a large sigh. "That's enough, if I keep talking to you I'll go crazy as well." As he said that he began cleaning up the trolly. "In any case, I still have more errands to run today. So hurry up and go home already."

"Huuuh! But!" It couldn't be helped, but it didn't stop me from objecting with all my power. "I can't! I can't! If I do I'll be lonely again!"

"Honestly, you're hopeless…" Matsuda-kun squinted his eyes and walked up to me, he softly grabbed my shoulders.

"Close your eyes."

"….. Huh?"

"It’s fine, just close them."

As I looked at Matsuda-kun’s face right in front of me, I could feel my heart pound against my ribcage, then I did as he asked and closed my eyes.

For some reason, my body felt hot. It felt so hot it was like I was melting. The blood vessels behind my ears were making a profuse, pulsing sound. It was that sort of situation. With an amazing momentum, it’s turned into one of those cliche things! Yup, that’s it!

And so, with those expectations in mind, my heart started going THUMP, THUMP, THUMP, and Matsuda-kun would sneak behind me. So I casually leaned back… ever so slightly… and Matsuda-kun pushed me out into the corridor.

"Ow!"

With the extra momentum, I ended up falling onto my bum in the middle of the hallway. It was a good thing I was wearing clean underwear, at least.

"Our next session is in three days. Don’t leave your dormitory unless you have to." Matsuda-kun only had that to say after I fell down so dramatically. With that, he close the rattling door.

"Owww… He tricked me… " My shoulders drooped, as I felt disappointed. Unhappily, I left the Neuroscience Institute.

After I left the biology building, I checked my notebook. Even if I have to go back to my dormitory, I don't really remember where it is. So as I was walking, I flipped through "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook".

As I looked through it I found a sketched map of the school. Since I had found it, it was a good chance to thoroughly review it. While I'm at it, I'll explain the floor plan of Hope's Peak Academy.

Well then, well then…

According to my map, Hope's Peak Academy is shaped like a huge diamond. It has four sections in total, the The east, north, west and south districts. Each district could be compared in size to a normal high school. Right now, I'm in Hope's Peak Academy's east district, but it's also sometimes called the centre. This is where the building for the regular school's staff reside. There's also a building here which is still under construction, the biology building where Matsuda-kun is, and a variety of buildings that would leave experts in pure jealousy. Furthermore, students are forbidden from entering faculty building here.

Then there's the west district. Here are a number of facilities and buildings for the reserve students at the preparatory school. It seems like I haven't really gone there yet. Unfortunately, I don't have much information about this district written in my notebook.

In the south district is the dormitory where students at Hope's Peak Academy live. Apart from the dormitory, there is also a book store and convenience store but mainly there is a large shopping centre where many students can shop. Incidentally, it looks like only regular

students can live in the dormitories. Also, the dormitories are supplied to the students as a bonus and it is not required that they pay to live in them.

Finally, there's the north district. though it seems to be more or less vacant now. Up until recently it was used as the old school building but since it is now neglected and unmaintained it is off limits for anyone to enter. So, there's no real need for me to go into detail over this section.

Then, in the middle of those four districts is another area. Hope's Peak Academy's "Central Plaza", it's spacious but also filled with large, overgrown trees. This is where students would usually go to relax, although it's off limits from 10 at night until 7 in the morning. Well, it's not like I'd just casually walk here in the middle of the night anyway.

Now then, I was able to make sense of the map, despite my messy handwriting and thus I managed to return to my dormitory safely. Inside the dormitory I ignored all the students who bothered to greet me, and I headed straight to my room. Inside my room there were stickers everywhere which said "This is my room". Looks like I'm in the right place. Even after confirming it as my room, I still stood my ground and daydreamed for a while. I couldn't think of what I wanted to do, so I just lazily lied on my bed. But since I had already napped somewhere else, I wasn't sleepy enough to fall asleep again.

So, reluctantly I decided I'd kill some time. But, even after deciding that I couldn't actually think of how to kill that time… not a single way!

I took out "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook" and flipped through it as I was lying down. In this notebook I had written down all my memories, even though I don't remember them. That is to say, I knew everything written in there was true, and non-fiction. It was exciting to read about my adventures, for a person as forgetful as

myself, it was great entertainment.

Conversations I had with Matsuda-kun, things Matsuda-kun would say. In truth, my notebook is filled with things about Matsuda-kun. But, that's because it's fun. As I flipped through that notebook, my hand suddenly stopped on one page in particular. That page was filled with a young man's face.

My heart leapt. Well, it only leapt slightly I guess.

Perhaps, this was a portrait of Matsuda-kun. Since my heart only leapt a tiny bit, I suppose this picture didn't measure up to the real Matsuda-kun. Hmm, maybe it'd look better if I redrew it a little.

"… Hmmm, I wonder if the nose is different… No, it's the eyes…. " I couldn't clearly remember what Matsuda-kun looked like. I used the amount my heart beated as a clue to whether I got it closer to what he looked like or not. I carefully changed the portrait. I wonder if this is how bomb disposal units feel like when looking for landmines. No, they probably feel a little different.

After a while of changing the portrait, my heart beated a little faster than it did before.

"There…. " I bet I was grinning without even realising. If I keep changing it a little every so often, I'm sure someday this picture will look just like Matsuda-kun. I'm sure I've probably been drawing this picture for a while, but of course, I don't remember if I have. But drawing it took more concentration than I realised and I didn't continue for very long.

I was starting to feel tired, so I put my notebook next to my bed and lied down on my back and I mumbled something…

I want to meet Matsuda-kun, I want to meet Matsuda-kun, I want to meet Matsuda-kun.

That was all I could do. It filled up my mind and I kept saying I want to meet Matsuda-kun.

For me there was nothing else,

Nothing else I could remember,

and nothing else I needed to do.

Because for me I had no class mates or even family. I didn't know about them at all, so I didn't think about them. For me, people living in the outside world, they were a boring stage play that I watched together with the audience. To begin with I don't remember any events that happen in real life, it doesn't even feel like I live in the same space as anyone else.

Looking at class scenes from the hallway, people sweating in the gym, returning from club meetings, people sitting on the ground, talking about silly things or having an awkward conversation with their family. I see those things and can't help but feel envious. In the end, all those things really have nothing to do with me. But, in this world that is so cut off from me, I at least have one person that keeps me connected. That's Matsuda-kun.

That's why I keep thinking about him so much. I just stopped thinking about those other things.

I want to meet Matsuda-kun, I want to meet Matsuda-kun, I want to

meet Ma-

Kathunk

I heard a strange noise from somewere.

I got up from my bed and saw a letter had fallen onto the ground in front of my door.

"It’s from Matsuda-kun!"

That was, not surprisingly, the conclusion I reached, I quickly hurled myself to where it laid and read it.

Dear Super High School Level Idiotic Forgetful girl,

I’m the one who took all your precious “past memories” that you so carefully wrote down. They’re filled to the brim with “memories” of that Matsuda Yasuke. The past carries a lot of weight, doesn’t it? Doesn’t it? Am I right? It does, if you think I’m lying then go ahead and look under your bed. That’s where you were keeping all your “memories”, but they’re not there anymore. That’s because I took them. If you want them back, could you come to the fountain in the central plaza at 1 tonight? I expect you to come by yourself. Though, I don’t think you have anyone you can ask to come with you anyway.

That’s all. I hope to see you tonight!

As I read that, I went stiff. I was shaking like I was jelly. That metaphor might not have been appropriate, but even still I was completely baffled.

Blackmail?

What is this?

I can't make sense of it…

But, this wasn't something I could figure out just by asking questions. Firstly, if I looked under the bed… I looked and there was nothing. To be honest, even if I had ever put an old notebook under there, I still wouldn't have remembered it. But if I really had filled my old notebook with Matsuda-kun then it was bad that it had been stolen. The memories in that note book, would have all been things I had written myself.

This is it?

Over 10 years on this earth I only have these few memories to show for it?

Soon I was overcome with a sense of unfamiliarity. Or maybe, a sense of loss? A decade of memories that I was unable to reach. I'm sure people who have grown used to small wounds still have to live through at least a little pain each day, but it wasn't the same for me. How will I ever grow used to such pain? I don't even know.

In any case, for now I was just angry.

"Who would even…. This has gotta be a prank…. " My strained voice was trembling as I grasped the now crumpled letter in my hand.

"What… What the hell… "

Maybe I should run away… But, what if this was some sort of plan in order to interfere with the budding romance between Matsuda-kun and I? It's probably because Matsuda-kun looks so cool, some other girl must have seen us together. They saw us harbouring the start of a romance, yes, that must be the reason, so they took things into their own hands. She took my memories hostage with the intention to stop me… AH, WHAT A COWARD! With that, my anger exploded bigger than Mount Etna's big explosion… not really.

"Hmmmm…. "

I guess I've forgotten how to express anger too. But even for me, who's lost touch with the world, there's no way I can't be angry… I just don't know how to handle it. Though this may be my limit for imaginary anger. In any case, even if I could not get rid of my anger, it quickly subsided.

"Well, I guess I don't have any choice but to go."

After I had completely calmed down, I lied on the bed. I waited until it was 1 at night. So as not to forget about it, I continued to read the letter until the appointed time.

"… But, I'm not going to fight them. It's fine… " I left my room, feeling depressed. I went down the corridor in the dimly lit dormitory, and went outside. The cold, wet wind gently caressed my skin.

"Um, it was the Central Plaza… wasn't it?"

While checking the school map in “Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook” I walked through the night with heavy feet.

This is the world of night. A world where everyone is asleep. In the middle of it, I was the only one walking. There weren’t any signs of anyone anywhere. It was a definite atmosphere of loneliness… I didn’t want to think any more about it.

Honestly, there were many times when I thought about going back to the dormitory. But, if I did, I had a bad feeling I would never see those memories again and so I reluctantly continued trudging forward. I kept going until I saw a large iron fence not too far away. It was shut and blocked off the entire pathway. My notebook said the Central Plaza was blocked between 10 at night and 7 in the morning, that’s probably what the fence was for.

To put it simply, if I can’t get past this fence, I won’t be able to get to my destination. This time I really did consider going back, it was a hard decision, but I ended up climbing the fence. Somehow I made it to the other side and and headed for my destination, I walked through the Central Plaza.

The darkness grew. It might have been because there were more trees around me. In the sunlight, the trees probably would have shined a bright green. Now the night stars were blocked out by the branches.

I continued through the darkness and suddenly my field of view opened substantially. I came across a small plaza, in the middle were relatively bright outdoor lights and next to those lights I spotted the fountain. The water poured out of the fountain making a light, trickling sound.

That’s the place… As soon as I realised that, the tension in the air

seemed to increase. I cautiously started to approach the fountain but after just a few steps I stopped.

I saw the silhouette of someone on the other side of the fountain. Due to the shade of the trees, I could only really see half of the figure but it was obvious to me that it was a body belonging to a man.

"Excuse me… " I tried to call out with a large voice but there was no response. … Maybe if I got a little closer.

I stepped forward onto the lawn. Despite my attempts, the figure didn't seem to notice me at all. I continued to trudge closer and yelled out again.

"Excuse me… was it you who called me here?"

Still no reaction. There's no way they can't have heard me that time.

My body started to feel heavy, a large feeling of anxiety weighed down on my shoulders. Before I knew it, my clenched hands were covered in sweat. Still, my sense of curiosity got the better of me and drew me closer to the figure. The outline of the figure gradually became clearer and clearer to me.

I could see… he was wearing a suit. His hair was all grey and on his neck were countless, deep wrinkles.

There was a sudden gust of wind and he swayed.

To and fro.

Back and forth.

Fanned by the wind, the man continued swaying hopelessly. Then suddenly shivers ran down my spine. As if a cold hand brushed against the back of my neck. I heard my inner self tell me to stop but before I knew it my feet were moving by themselves. I looked at the man's face and I noticed something.

His eyes met mine.

I saw his wide, bloodshot eyes meet mine. His face was pale and covered in fading veins. He looked scary. His tongue lolled from his mouth down to his neck like a rotten sea cucumber.

And, he wasn't standing.

He was hanging by a rope around his neck. The wind continued to cause him to sway to and fro, back and forth. Just by looking at it I felt myself go cold. I know I should write this in my notebook but screw it I'm getting out of here! This has nothing to do with me!

Drip drip.

I heard a dripping sound coming from his feet. I looked down. Something was dripping from the tips of his feet into a puddle below him. For some reason, in the puddle was a notebook. As soon as I saw it, I felt a current run all the way through my body into my brain. There were some letters written on the cover, they were smudged, but there.

Written on it said “Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook”.
Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 6

I realised after a while I was running, with tears and snot all over my face and I was writing something down in my notebook.

But, I couldn’t remember why I was running anymore. I started to slow down and read what I had written in my notebook. The memory I forgot just a moment ago instantly came back to me.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!" While I was screaming I ran through the Central Plaza at full speed. After blindly climbing over the iron fence, I ran along the pavement until I saw the dormitory ahead of me. I ran into the dormitory as quickly as I could, looking for Matsuda-kun’s room. At a time like this the only one I can think of, the only one I can rely on is him!

As I ran down the dormitory corridor I flipped through my notebook, looking for where Matsuda-kun’s room is. I remembered something.

"Unless you have a good reason, you can’t visit Matsuda-kun’s room at all."

But, if this isn’t a good reason then I don’t know what is, so I ignored that warning. I flicked further through the pages, I finally remembered where Matsuda-kun’s room was and arrived at it.

BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG

I violently banged on his door and screamed with all my strength.

"M-MATSUDA-KUN! I-I-IT'S AN EMERGENCY, AN EMERGENCY!!"

No matter how long I waited at his door, it didn't open.

"M-MATSUDA-KUN! OY, MATSUDA-KUN!"

Even so I continued to bash my hands on his door. Desperately, I still hit the door. As I lost hope that he would appear, I still hit my hands on the door. Hitting, banging, I still bashed on the door.

".. Who is it already?"

A door opened, but it was to the room next door.

… Huh?

Strangely enough, there was no one there. The door had opened, and I heard a voice but I couldn't see anyone.

"So, what happened? What's with the racket?" The voice echoed through the hallway, it was the voice of a child. I looked around once, but just as I thought there was no one there.

"… Big Sis, where are you looking? I'm over here."

"W-Where are you?" I screamed at the seemingly empty hallway. "S-

Show yourself!" With that I heard the voice again.

"Ahaha, I'm not hiding. I'm right in front of you. You just haven't realised it yet, Big Sis."

Right in front of me?

To help calm myself, I took in a deep breath, slowed my harsh breathing and focused my mind.

That's when I realised.

"Oh, have you finally noticed me?"

Right in front of my eyes stood a small, young boy who looked strangely like a Zashiki Warashi. (wiki)

"... Ah, don't feel bad about not seeing me. You see, my presence has always been barely noticeable ever since I was born. Nearly everyone I meet doesn't notice me. It doesn't bother me though, I'm used to it."

He had the face of a young boy and the voice of someone who had not reached puberty. He lacked any distinctive features surprisingly enough. For instance, if you were told to draw a child's face without looking at a picture for reference, you would end up drawing this one. It was identifiable in one aspect at least, due to the lack of features he certainly had a unique face.

"So, what's wrong?"

“…. Eh? What do you mean what’s wrong?”

“Oy, oy, I mean you came hear banging on the door screaming bloody murder at an hour when even insomniacs would be asleep and you don’t even know what’s wrong!

In his hands he held a huge bag filled to the brim with sweet bread that would be suitable for the appetite of people in a growth spurt. On the front of the paper bag, it looked like the logo for “Handel & Gretel”. He picked a sweet bread out of the bag and tossed it in his mouth.

“Fhwo, Fwa Fwahen?”

“….. Eh? What did you say?”

The young boy chewed and swallowed the bread, “I said what happened? Tell me. My talents are pretty useful.”

As he urged me on, he looked at me. Paying special attention to my chest and legs.

“Um, before we get to that I’d like to ask something… Why’s there a kid here? Does your big brother or big sister go to this scho-”

“I’m Kamishiro Yuuto from Hope’s Peak Academy’s 77th bach. Nice to meet you.”

“….. Huh?”

“I’m a high school student”

… What?

“Of course, my hair down low has already grown.”

… Oh my!

“Don’t act so surprised, anyway I’ve introduced myself so why not tell me your name!”

“R-Right, um…” With that I held up my notebook in front of his face.

“Ah ha! Well that’s one way to introduce yourself.” He replied from the other side of my notebook. “Hmmm, Otonashi Ryouko, is it? …. Hm, it’s not a bad name. My patience leveled up waiting for you just to introduce yourself though.”

He had an innocent laugh, just like a primary school student.

“Well then,” His face suddenly became very serious. “What kind of trouble?” His eyes sparkled with curiosity… or rather, they glared with curiosity. Actually, it wasn’t curiosity, they were more greedy, more calculating, more fanatical.

“It’s just you seemed to be in a huge rush, so I can only assume you saw something pretty bad.”

He stared me in the eye with an aura that seemed to clash with his young appearance. He thrust his hand into the paper bag, and took out a sweet bread, like it was the lottery.

“Oh, sweet! Ebisu Pumpkin Melon Bread!” At that moment he put on an innocent smile and stuffed the bread into his mouth happily.

“So what is it? This trouble?”

“Um… it’s not really trouble or anything… It’s just I needed to get into Matsuda-kun’s room…”

“Fhafufhwaf fwhou.”

“Sorry, I didn’t quite catch that….”

Kamishiro-kun swallowed the bread and said “Matsuda Yasuke is out.”

“... Out?”

“Yup, out!”

“EEEE

“You say that, but it might have been unavoidable.” Kamishiro-kun continued to nibble his bread, despite my obvious distraught emotional state. “I mean, his edginess is kinda well know among the 77th batch. After banging against his door so loudly I’m pretty sure he would have noticed by now. I’m in the next room and even I noticed and came out to investigate.”

“But if he’s not here… then where is Matsuda-kun?”

“Maybe he’s pulling an all-nighter at his lab? He does spend entire nights there pretty often.”

“Got it! His lab!” I turned away from him and began to run.

“Ah, wait!” Kamishiro-kun stopped me. “You can’t be going there now, can you? Did you forget? I think there’s a crime prevention sensor on the iron fence in the east district.”

“... Eh? I can’t go?” So then I can’t rely on Matsuda-kun for this. “You got to… be kidding…” I searched through my brain thoroughly. “Oh no…. What should I do? This is the biggest crisis I’ve ever faced…”

“So, why not tell me!” Kamishiro-kun looked towards me with a calm expression. “It’s a shame to see Big Sis’ cute face having such a troubled expression, I can’t just leave. What’s the situation? I’ll listen to you.”

What kind of trouble?! Well, you know just…

“… huh?”

Just…

“Um… what was it again?” Apparently my head doesn’t know. Looks like I forgot again.

“Um, wait half a moment…” I quickly checked my notes.

“Ahaha, I said you don’t have to hide it. Well, if it wasn’t that serious then you really shouldn’t have knocked on his door like that. At this time of night, it’s almost as if you found a dead body from Kindaichi Case Files!” (wiki)

A dead body… As soon as Kamishiro-kun said that I found the words in my notebook. At that moment I was attacked by a sudden realization and I stopped breathing.

“Hey… what’s wrong….. oy, you look like you just saw a ghost, Big Sis!”

I found the memories that said I found a dead body. I couldn’t breathe. I tried telling myself the breathe over and over again.

This has nothing to do with me.

Just keep repeating that.

“Nothing to do with me… nothing to do with me… nothing to do with me…” For me it was like repeating a magical enchantment. Every time I said that the world quickly shrunk down… it was a magical enchantment.

“That’s right… Nothing to do with me… Nothing to do with me, right…” By repeating that to myself I was finally able to calm myself down and close the notebook prope-I read my memory once more carelessly.

Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook at the feet of the dead body.

At that moment I screamed louder than I ever had before.

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH! I FORGOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOT!”

My notebook had been dropped in a puddle. No matter how many times I could argue that it had nothing to do with me, I couldn’t deny the fact my name was there at the scene of the crime. This is no different to being an extra being pulled into centre stage in front of a faceless audience and given harsh treatment!

This is bad. My heart was pounding violently!

“W-W-W-W-What’ll I do… W-W-What’ll I do….” It was breaking. The world beneath my feet was crumbling apart. Before it fell apart completely though, I needed to get that notebook!

Driven by my frustrations at maximum level, I sped off at full speed.

“B-Big Sis! Wait a second!” A voice called from behind me. “If you’d just tell me what the situation i-”

“Well then, if you could, tell Matsuda-kun when he comes back that I was looking for him. BYE!” I yelled back loudly without even looking and ran through the corridor.

I left the dormitory and dashed along the sidewalk in the south district. I climbed over the fence with my momentum from running. I ran as quickly as I could through the pitch black darkness to the Central Plaza. Even after I had run out of breath I didn’t notice and continued running at full speed, I barely made it to the fountain.

But…

“... Wha…?”

I felt a strange sense of discomfort.

I strained my eyes to see over and over again and… yeah, there’s something strange here. I usually trust other people more than I trust my own head, if I come across some strange circumstances, I would doubt my own brai-

I discovered the dead body of an old man at the fountain in the Central Plaza.

Well at least my memories seem to back up my conviction. The reason behind my feeling of discomfort was caused by the scene in front of me.

There's no dead body. That's the reason.

It was strange that there was a dead body, but now that there's no dead body it's only stranger.

Stranger and stranger… the epitome of strangeness.

Perhaps they're actually alive?

Or maybe they're undead?

I didn't know what the reason was, unconsciously I looked around me. At the base of one of the nearby trees, I saw something. It was the notebook. The one with "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook" written on it.

But, what's this? Why would my notebook be here? As I was questioning it I walked to where the notebook was.

"Ta dadadada ta da~!"

I flinched and started trembling as I looked behind me. There was a girl standing right behind me.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! So you finally decided to show up!" She was in a daunting pose, with her arms folded over her chest, she looked to be around the same age as me.

She had flashy make up on that seemed to have come straight out of a fashion magazine. She had a soft, sizable blonde hair. Her chest bulged out of her uniform which was stupidly partially unbuttoned. Under her short skirt were a pair long, thin, white legs.

At first glance she looked like a normal, cute girl. But those eyes, those eyes seemed anything but ordinary. Her eyes were black, bottomless swamps, they were so dark they seemed to imprison any surrounding darkness… Such strange eyes.

As soon as I saw her eyes, the warning lights in my head flashed code red. Run away, every cell in my anatomy was screaming at me to run. But at the same time, it felt like any resistance I put up was futile. I was a prisoner in her jail. But, I couldn't stay still.

"... Hey, hey? Why are you ignoring me? Are you a mute character by default?" The girl was smiling but it was a smile that absolute power gave to the weak, it was a smile of pure evil.

"Ah! I get it!" She suddenly raised her voice, she lifted her hand and pointed her index finger at my forehead. "What you were just thinking about. You were looking at where my arms were folded, weren't you? 'Come to think of it, I never cross my arms across my chest anymore. But that's because some girl's breasts are too large to fold their arms over, riiiiight….'. How rude! A woman who takes pride in her chest size is awful! You should trust in the world's boobs! Don't you know that all those bad things are born from the shitty fantasy world of variety shows, anime and games? Ah, GROSS! It's seriously gross! But you know, have more faith in the now! Just because out in rural areas you might have been considered hot property, when you come out to the city you don't compare to anyone but you still want to be noticed so you stupidly take off your clothes for anyone when in reality they can see she's just a girl with an empty head and a hot piece of ass who they can easily take the virginity from!! Changing the subject, virgins are the worst, aren't they? Even more so the fact that the characters for virgin(童貞) and the

characters for Dong Zhuo's name(董卓) are so similar! But even so after all that, Lü Bu was still the one to murder him. Though I guess in the end Dong Zhuo is still trillions of times better than a virgin! …. And, what was I talking about? … Aaah, right, right (she says sou sou in japanese) … The story of Cao Cao (Cao Cao is pronounced Sou Sou in Japanese)? In retrospect, Cao Cao joining the coalition against Dong Zhuo is at least a litt-"

"Hey, can you slow do-Ow!" Obviously offended that I tried to cut off her rant, she pressed her index finger into my forehead making me stop.

"Ah, I remembered this time! We were talking about how you should have more faith in boobs! You know, if you have any bad things to say about faith in boobs, then you should just drop it right now. Or you should just pronuncio in Italiano! If you don't then it'll be difficult for you when you get older! Understand? They'll end up drooping all over the shop! Or will you be one of those people? Who end up winning against the effects of gravity! Have you somehow acquired the skills to defeat gravity? What a surprise! So then is Magneto going to come scout you out? Well, so I say, but is it possible he's already foun-"

"Please, stop for a- fugha" I tried stopping her by being more insistent but she shoved her fingers into my mouth.

"Shut down…. wait, that's not it. What is it you say when you want someone to stop talking? Well, whatever. In any case, stop talking. Stop interrupting me. I love talking, you know! Silent-chan should keep her mouth shut like a good silent-chan. Since it's my turn right now after all…"

"Fhuga… Hafwhefa…"

“Ah ha! I don’t understand a thing you’re saying~!” Saliva flowed out of my mouth onto her fingers and into a thin thread towards the ground, though the girl didn’t seem to notice at all.

“In any case, what’s your name, Silent-chan?”

“Fhughahohe… Fhuga…”

“Oy, oy,” She made a grumpy face, “Don’t say fugafuga… just say your name. If you don’t say it in three seconds or less then I’ll follow the three second rule and rip your tongue out.”

As she finished saying that she grasped my tongue in her fingers. She dug her fingers in and used them as a vise for my tongue.

“Okaaaaaaaay! One…” She started the countdown. Huh? It’s not a joke? My body was covered in a cold sweat.

Wait a second, I can’t talk if she’s holding my tongue!

“Twooo…” I realised I was still holding my notebook in my hand. Quickly I threw it in front of her eyes.

“Hmm. Otonashi Ryouko is it… But that’s too bad!” Like she was a demon from hell she spread her mouth into a smile and laughed. “I told you to SAY your name didn’t I? Not show me your name!”

“... Fhwa?”

“Well then, it’s been three seconds, I’m taking your tongue nooooooooooooooooooooow!”

“Ha, HagaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAfuguUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUuuuUAAAAAA” With everything I could muster I tried desperately to resist. Her nails cut into my tongue cruelly. The taste of iron and blood mixed in my saliva throughout my mouth, as I tasted it my will to fight rapidly disappeared. She stared at me blankly, her eyes filled with the dark colour of despair as they absorbed any hope I had. She reminded me that it was useless to resist. All my energy seemed to disappear and my notebook slipped out of my hand. I gave up on everything and let my body relax.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 6 (Part 2)

“….. Uhu” I heard a laughing voice.

“Uhu…. Aha… Ahahahaha!” She was laughing bizarrely with an ecstatic expression and flushed cheeks.

“AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
She ruthlessly, barbarically laughed. When she finished laughing she finally pulled her fingers out of my mouth.

“Cough cough cough” As soon as she did I was coughing like a crazy person. Blood mixed with saliva dripped out of my mouth.

“Aha, I was joking. It was all a big joke! There’s no reason on why I’d want your tongue! Did you come from the middle ages or something?”

“Cough, cough, cough cough cough”

“Hey, are you wondering why I’d do something like that? I’ll tell you why, I want to see that face of yours filled with despair. You see, for me that’s the best kind of self introduction”

She bent over towards me while I was still coughing and wiped the saliva from her hands onto my back. Then she said in a very serious tone of voice,

“Anyway, I still haven’t introduced myself, have I?”

I stood up properly, surprised. I was overcome by a bad feeling, like something really awful was about to happen.

I wanted no involvement with this girl, my intuition rejected her. But, she didn't stop. She continued proudly and announced her name.

"My name is Tenkuujoura Byuta!"

"Tenkuujou… ra Byu…"

"Not really! It was a joke, a joke!"

A joke… has she no concept of timing?

"Ah, you were thinking "Has she no concept of timing", right?"

Furthermore, she is excellent at guessing.

"But, jokes are just great, don't you think? Hey, wasn't it Hirobumi Itou who said, 'Jokes and humour exist so mankind can live without going mad'? Hmmm, that was a lie. Hirobumi-chan never said any such thing!" (Hirobumi Itou)

I didn't know how to reply. In any case, the girl finally replied.

It really took her a while.

“My name is Enoshima Junko. I go by “Super High School Level Fashion Girl”. Sometimes I’m a charismatic model with an adoring audience. Sometimes I’m a charismatic… I can’t tell you yet! Forgive me!”

She announced herself and the light from the outdoor lights shone on her back, as if she were an actor in the spotlight on stage.

Enoshima Junko.

I couldn’t read this girl’s thoughts at all, but I knew I shouldn’t associate with her. My body began moving by itself. Incidentally, I noticed I had picked up my notebook and was writing her name in it.

“... Oyoyo, what are you doing?” Enoshima-san looked at me quickly with a curious face.

“Ah, um… this is…” Without being able to think of a good answer, I hesitated to reply.

“Argh! Don’t tell me it’s a secret! You’re going into your silent-chan mode again!” She puffed out her cheeks like she was a little kid, and made a frustrated expression. From one moment to the next, her expression changed in a heartbeat. I admit I was a little impressed.

“You know, the whole Silent-chan character isn’t really in style today, huh? Since human beings have such excellent conversational skills, you shouldn’t exploit it anymore. It’s Reece Witherspoon. No wait, that’s not it… It’s really wasteful!

“But, this conversation is going no where, all you ever say is too cryptic for-”

“Stop saying you. I introduced myself earlier didn’t I?” Her tone was threatening.

“Um… Enoshima-san, I haven’t been able to understand anything you said for a while, it’s been too c-”

“Drop the san. I hate to be referred to with such formalities!”

“But we only met a few minutes ago, I really shouldn’t be rude…”

“We’re not complete strangers or anything. Ahaha, that’s wrong! I mean, you and I are penpaaaaaaaaaals!”

“... Penpals?”

“You know, you read my letter, didn’t you? You came here because you read it, didn’t you?”

Letter? What letter? I checked through my notebook quickly and was soon reminded. As I remembered I raised my voice in surprise.

“Eh? So then you?!”

“That’s right, I’m the one who took your memory hostage, I’m the secret identity of that beautiful kidnapper!”

“B-But, why-”

“Hey! Don’t rely on me, think for yourself for once!”

“Um… So you really wanted Matsuda-kun and I to-”

“That’s absolutely wrong!”

I tried my best to answer well, but I was just dismissed instantly by her with a threatening attitude.

“Well, either way, I can’t really tell you much!” As she said that, Enoshima-san took the notebook that had been placed under the tree and stuffed it away in her cleavage without paying any mind to the wet cover.

“Ufufu, it’s too bad but I’m keeping this notebook for a while longer. I can’t let you take it from the crime sce-oh my, oh my oh my oh my oh my.” Enoshima-san’s eyes suddenly widened.

“Oh my my my my my?” She said turning around, while looking everywhere. She yelled out like a madman.

“It’s gone! It’s gone! It’s gone! It’s gone! It’s gone! It’s gone! It’s gone!” I was taken aback by her sudden change and timidly asked her.

“W-What’s… gone?”

“It’s gone! It’s gone! Isn’t it weird? There’s nothing here! There’s nothing here!” She ran around the perimetre of the tree saying the same thing over and over again like a broken record, though I did not understand why.

“So, tell me what’s gone!” I pressed more with a stronger tone of voice.

“Hm? Ahh…” Finally she looked at me. In contrast to what I expected her expression to look like, her face was completely expressionless. She continued looking at me with a vacant face and spoke in a terribly monotone voice, in a light tone, as if she was talking about something like a dropped coin.

“The dead body, the body that was dead. There was a post-death body here before!”

“Huh?”

“Ah, you forgot that too? Seriously, you really are forgetful. I mean, you saw the dead body too, didn’t you?” As she said that another question came to my mind.

“... Huh? How’d you know I’m forgetful? Did I tell you?”

“T-That doesn’t matter. There’s not mistake, I know there was definitely a corpse here before!” Enoshima-san’s voice rose. She brushed aside my question. “You’ve gotta believe me! There was a dead body here earlier! I know there was because I killed him myself!”

“... Huh?” I went stiff suddenly.

“I mean, I came up from behind him and hung him, with my own two hands. You know, he wet his pants a little! Old men like him really should always have diapers at the ready. If they did it really would give a person a better sense of relief!”

“Huh?” I stood still, as if someone had cast confuse on me. In short, despite my confused state Enoshima-san continued to talk with exaggerated gestures.

“Teehee, I’m a little hesitant to say, but some of it got on my clothing. So I went to the bathroom to wash myself but, while I was gone… the dead body seems to have slipped away. It totally disappeared. My bad, he really surprised me with that piss. So you know, that notebook I picked up just now was covered in piss.”

“Huh?”

“To be honest with you, I had him there only as a sort of example for others… Seriously, who did that…”

“Huh?”

“Honestly, are you going on with that again? Shouldn’t you get with the times already and bring out your inner energetic character?”

“Huh?”

“What an idiot!”

It was useless. In my head I couldn’t make sense of her words, spinning round and round in my thoughts. As they grinded against my brain, I was struck by an awful headache. I really just don’t get her at all. Anyway, she said she had just killed someone didn’t she? Why would she say that to someone she only just met?

“Ah, you’re wondering why I’d tell all this to you, aren’t you?” Once again, she guessed correctly. “I’ve decided! You’re going to help me!”

“…. Eh?” I was in a daze, but I had a tremendous amount of anxiety building inside of me and it spread out to my whole body. “M-Me help you? W-Wait a second! I-I can’t get involved in something like that!”

“Huh?”

“I said… I can’t get involved in something like that!”

“Huh?”

“I s-said-”

“Stop stressing so much! You’re starting to turn too much into an energetic character!”

“It’s not that, I-”

“You misunderstood me. I mean, for example, when you eat cup ramen, you have to wait three minutes after putting in the hot water. While waiting you ask out loud ‘Why three minutes?’ and listen for an answer. But no one ever answers, do they?”

My thoughts were filled with an overwhelming, chaotic mess.

“W-What are you talking about? That has nothing to do w-”

“It has everything to do with it! It’s the same thing!” Enoshima-san retorted with a strong tone. “I’ve decided, you’re going to do what I tell you to! I don’t have to explain any more! Ah, I’m not boasting or anything but I get too impatient and always give up before it’s been three minutes! People always think I prefer harder noodles but the reason isn’t anywhere near that confusing! Hey, you get me, don’t you?

Any cognition I may have had disintegrated with a rattling sound, my brain had collapsed into a mound of rubble, all that remained was an astoundingly large question mark.

I don’t understand her at all.

That was the one and only thing I knew for absolute sure.

It’s impossible to understand others perfectly, it’s easier to perform the superhuman act of making it to the Olympics. That would be a truly incredible feat. Still, I knew from the very start that I shouldn’t get involved with her. But hey, at least it’s still not too late to get

away from her.

That's right, I should run away!

Finally, it came down to such a simple answer. Immediately I backed away from her, I kicked the ground and ran the other way.

Only to run into Enoshima-san head on.

"What the?!" I fell on my bum. My whole body went numb and my backside hurt, I looked up at her. Before I knew it, Enoshima-san was blocking my route. How was she able to move there so quickly? It was as if she had moved before I had even turned and managed to walk around me so she was behind me in a split second.

"T-Teleportation?!"

"I prefer Shukuchi. That's what they use in light novels, I like that more." (Shukuchi)

My whole body felt beaten and bruised. It seems like no matter what I do, I won't be able to escape from this girl. I could say this has nothing to do with me as many times as I wanted… but this girl won't let me have nothing to do with it.

"Hey, maybe you misunderstood me?" She crouched down and looked at my properly.

I couldn't look away from her eyes. Warning bells rung in my head

again. I couldn't look away.

"I told you, it doesn't matter if you want to or not, it all depends on what Enoshima Junko decides. That's why, the very idea of even running away from Enoshima Junko is just idiotic. Since everything in this world belongs perfectly to Enoshima Junko. This man, that girl, anyone and everyone on this planet were just born and given accomadation on Enoshima Junko's world. To be brief, "What yours is mine" and "You are mine"... This whole planet is just a plaything for Enoshima Junko."

What? This girl is so self centered and evil it's nauseating. I could only hope this girl wasn't serious and silently curse my own lack of luck for running into her.

"Well, whatever's fine. But, getting back on topic, the dead body." She seemed to be changing the discussion. She shifted her weight onto her other leg and directed a question at me. "Hey, do you know Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee?"

"Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee?" I checked through my notebook but I couldn't find those words anywhere. It seems like I know nothing about them. But, why would she suddenly say that name all of a s-

"Smells like you haven't… Oh, wrong sense, sorry! Do over. Looks like you haven't!" Enoshima Junko spread out her hands in an exaggerated manner, just like a show presenter. "Bing Biiiing! That's right, the corpse that should have been here, that was a member of Hope's Peak Academy's Steering Committee! Those guys have more power than the teaching staff and the headmaster, that means they're practically in charge of the whole place. Ufufu, doesn't hearing that sort of thing make you all excited?"

No, this girl was the only one getting excited.

“But, you don’t have to worry. I mean, I decided to kill him here. That’s right, I had decided everything from the very beginning. In the end, it’s pointless no matter how much those guys try to hide “that incident”.”

“... That incident?” I unintentionally paid attention to her again. It was just an instant reaction I had without really meaning to react. It was something I blurted out in the spur of the moment without thinking about it.

“Oh my, oh my, oh my, you’re interested after all? You’re interested about that? After hearing a thing like “that incident” in quotation marks so many times, you can’t help but feel curious, right?” Enoshima-san then placed her hands on her hips, put on a proud pose and declared loudly, “I’m talking about “The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History”! That’s what I mean by “that incident”!”

As soon as I heard her words in the the inside of my head I felt a weird heat. What is this?

A hot tingling sensation paralysed my consciousness. At the same time, as if I were manipulated by a puppetmaster I started to write down words in my notebook.

The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History.

“You’d be really good as a part time worker. Since you always have to write down everything the manager tells you on the first day in a memo book. But if I ever had to listen to a manager’s constant talking, I’d send them to hell. I’m not even kidding, I’d take them straight to hell. First, I’d attack their family, then I’d attack all their friends and

acquaintances so they can get a small tasting of despair. Then, finally when they're begging for me to kill them, I'll make them suffer even more… Anyway, who are you?"

"Eh?" I looked up from my notebook in surprise. The girl had a perfect glare on. It could slice down anything in it's path. But she wasn't looking at me, instead she was looking at something behind me. I looked back for a brief second. But, I just saw trees in the pitch black darkness of night.

"Hey, I asked you who you were, aren't you listening?" Even so, Enoshima-san continued to question the darkness.

In the corner of my peripheral vision I think I saw something move. Just after that, something emerged, swaying from a gap in the densely packed trees.

"… Eh?"

A white mask against a jet black background appeared. It was a person's face. It seemed almost like it was completely covered in white paint.

"Aah, you found me, huh?" Along with the voice, I could make out a silhouette of a person out of the darkness. I could see a pair of eyes that looked like they belonged to a snake. A long slender body dressed in a black school uniform. He had black hair that slid down to his shoulders, matching his clothing with black on black. From the clearing a white face with thin eyes, not unlike a reptile peaked out.

"My name is… Madarai Isshiki." It was a man's mouth, though it looked almost as if it did not move.

“I see. That’s nice and all but… what a silly name! Enoshima Junko is one thousand times cooler!” I could see Enoshima-san roaring back at him over my shoulder. Even in this situation this girl was smiling and looking unnerved.

“I can’t argue with that, but I do still have confidence in this name of mine. But speaking of which, you seem to have an upper hand in something else.”

“Huh, and what’s that?”

“If I could, I wanted to talk with you alone. Well, I suppose this is inevitable.” Muttering under his breath Madarai took something out of his pocket… What looks to be a photo. Like a reptile he restlessly moved his line of sight up and down. Looking between us and the photo he was holding.

“... I see now, so that’s Enoshima Junko.”

“So, you need Enoshima Junko for something?” She replied instantly.

“No, I just heard a rumour.”

“About how Enoshima Junko is a flawlessly perfect, beautiful woman with no equal?”

“Well, that’s certainly the case but no…” Madarai carefully separated his words and radically changed his tone of voice, “Is it not Enoshima Junko who is involved in “that incident”?”

“So you wanna hear what I know about it? Ha ha, no can do!” Even after that Enoshima-san was smiling as carefree as ever. That strong facade she had one showed no signs of breaking. “I wouldn’t bother talking about that to small fry like yourself. Learn your place!”

“…. I thought you’d say as much. Well, I didn’t expect you to tell me easily.”

“What are you gonna do about it? Don’t tell me, you’re gonna force it out of me? What are you? An old fashioned liberal? Such a stupid old fashioned tactic only works in V-Cinema films!” (Direct to video releases by Toei)

“I may be old fashioned but I should tell you, I’m not the type to go easy on women. I can only hope you’re not expecting me to act nice.” Madarai shot a stare right through us.

Madarai and Enoshima-san glared at each other. I seemed to be able to hear a rumbling sound. This really has nothing to do with me, right? This is a matter to be sorted out between a man named Madarai Isshiki and a woman named Enoshima Junko. So I really don’t have anything to do with this, but if that’s the case, why am I trembling in fear when I have no connection to this at all?

“Well then, are the two of you prepared? If you-”

“W-Wait a second!” I raised my voice in protest. Enoshima-san and Madarai both redirected their gazes to me. “Uh, erm… it’s just, isn’t it strange that you said two? I mean, what use would I be for-”

“I can’t let one of you run away, now can I. You seem to be involved

with Enoshima Junko, so there's a possibility that you may also be involved in that incident." Madarai said while licking his lips. "You have only yourself to blame for getting involved with Enoshima Junko. I've been hearing complaints about this girl for quite some time now. I was only prepared for one person, but now I have to deal with two? That's twice as much work. But still, since I was patient before, patience now comes to me."

"W-What… is that… ?" What a confusing theory… No, that's not a theory. It's just an overwhelmingly self centered ethic. Speaking of self centered though, it still doesn't compare to her's.

"Hmmmm, I get it. You definitely have a can-do attitude. But you know… this girl here has a can-kill attitude!" While saying that, Enoshima-san patted my head as she smiled. Which girl was she talking about? "Hey, now's not the time to be absent minded, I'll see you later!"

Huh? See who when?

"Ah! I see the resemblance! Your imitation of bad fur seals has improved so much. But now's not the time for that, go ahead and fight him, quickly now. It's your job, isn't it?"

D-Did she say… fight him?

"W-W-What are you sayiiiiiiiiiiiiing?!" I screamed out and threw my hands in the air.

"It's fine. You're a can-be, can-do girl! That's right, a can-kill, can-die girl!"

“Oy, oy, don’t speak with such twisted words… Saying things like ‘can-kill, can-die’, it’s not really something high school girls should say.” As I heard him say that, Madarai grimaced with a bitter smile.

“Oh my, oh my, you don’t like mutual killing?” Enoshima-san replied with a mocking tone of voice, “Whatever shall I do, I didn’t expect you to have such resolves. I’m a little disappointed.”

“... It’s only natural. I don’t have a reason to kill. After all, I’m still planning on hearing many stories. I’ll try to keep your mouths working at least.” Madarai squinted his snake-like eyes further. To emphasize his point, he repeated himself, “But only… your mouths.”

He stood tall and swayed like a flame on a candle, with each sway he inched closer.

“Hmmmm, it’s seriously a can-do attitude.”

“It’s only natural. I’ve been waiting for this opportunity ever since that incident.” As Madasai said that, he gripped his hand to his chest and squeezed, though his hand seemed to contrast against his snake-like appearance. If I do hit him, his face would cave in just like a manga character’s!

“W-W-W-What should we do… W-W-What can I do…!” I looked back with my eyes filling with tears.

“I knew it, it really can’t be helped.” Enoshima-san looked stiff and replied in a quiet, deep voice. She then changed back to her normal, refreshing tone, “You’re up!”

“W-WAAAAAAAIIIIIIIT!”

“Ahaha! Don’t worry, it’ll be fine!” She pulled me into a hug from behind. “Of course you’ll cooperate with me. Now you’ll be able to display your “ability” to your heart’s content!”

Huh? My ability? Did she say my ability?

“Hey, hey, when you’re in a pickle. shouldn’t you just look in your notebook?”

“Ah, right…”

As she said that, I looked back down at my notebook and as soon as I did that…

Whoosh!

Crack, bang!

Boom, thump, thud, bam bam bam bam!

Sounds that you would usually only hear in anime echoed around. I looked up out of reflex.

“… Eh?” Enoshima-san who was hugging my shoulders only a moment ago was now engaged in an intense battle with Madarai just a few metres in front of me.

Kapow, wham, bang bang bang bang!

Madarai attacked with his limbs as if they were whips. Against it, Enoshima-san didn't pull back an inch, despite her femininity… W-What was that move!

"Hey, you! You look like a pig, stop pacing-I mean spacing out!" Enoshima-san swung her leg around like she was an amazing gymnast and raised her voice. "Keep reading your notebook!"

As she swooped her leg around, Madarai dropped to the ground with a short groan. As he did that, he twisted around his slender body and with the momentum he returned a kick as if he were breakdancing.

"Whoops!" Enoshima-san dodged jumping in the air, Madarai took the opportunity to get back on his feet and immediately threw a right straight punch. It looked as though he was too faw away to land a hit, but his arm ignored it's length reached her. However, Enoshima-san managed to block it with her fist, reversed the action and kicked his abdomen with her right leg.

"Gwah…!" Madarai groaned out in response. The two finally stopped fighting.

"Oh, I win. That was a crescent kick. Ever since I saw it in a magazine I've been wanting to try it out." The crouching Madarai didn't question her, Enoshima-san had a big cheesy grin on.

In any case, how did the school wrestling fight even begin? I've forgotten but there seems to be no context for-

“I told you, what are you doing, standing around like an idiot?” I was standing motionless, stunned, when Enoshima-san’s frustrated voice interrupted my thoughts. “Hurry up and use your notebook to fill you in. I don’t want to risk my life for noth-”

Her expression changed.

A high kick came at her from behind like a whip, Enoshima-san’s thin body was mowed down like a piece of paper.

“Ah!” She raised her voice and jumped away before she could look around.

“... Phew, that was risky.” She got up from her kneeling position as if nothing happened. Speaking of risky, her left arm appeared to have a red mark on it. It seems like she must have used it in order to block Madarai’s kick. I thought it was strange that Enoshima’s thin arms weren’t broken at all by the force-No, it seem like I wasn’t the only one. Madarai was scowling at Enoshima-san, looking clearly frustrated.

“Ufu, scared since I’m so strong? Did you hold back? I’m the ultimate weapon fashion girl who is thus far unbeaten in three hundred fights! Bam!”

“Shut up.” He hatefully scoffed at her words. Madarai went for another strike at her. The intense battle resumed. They went at each other using their whole bodies, right hand, right foot, left hand, left foot, and alternated rapidly from offensive to defensive and back to offensive. While watching them I began writing things down in my notebook.

“COME OOOOOOOOOOOON!” Enoshima-san had just returned a high roundhouse kick and Madarai’s grin strained. He avoided her high kick, crouched down and dived at her body. His long hands reached out to her, and tried to hug her waist.

But in that moment, Enoshima-san thrust her knee to his chin.

“... Guh!”

Madarai managed to swerve in mid-tackle and narrowly avoid Enoshima-san’s knee barely. But, he lost his balance and tried to land on the grass with his right hand. However, he landed with his entire right side body, with a “hiiiyah”, Enoshima-san delivered another roundhouse kick. Hastily, Madarai attempted to guard with his right hand, but was too late.

The intense kick hit Madarai’s right temple. With a dry sound, Madarai’s bent figure slid up the lawn.

“I win! I win! I butterfly samba’d to the zigzag samba!” Saying that, Enoshima-san laughed loudly. (I think this is a reference to the opening of Captain Tsubasa, Moete Hero)

“I have a habit of letting my blabbing mouth take charge. Well, you really should take some time to relearn the basics. You gotta crawl before you can walk!” Enoshima-san cackled. She took out a hand mirror from under her uniform and began to fix her hair. Despite having just been in a fight, she was breathing calmly like nothing had happened. I ran up to her and cheered happily.

“Y-You did it! Somehow you did it! I thought you were done for, for a while!” Enoshima-san’s expression completely 180’d.

“Huuh?” Her eyes filled with disgust, “… Were you even paying attention? Do you think it’s case closed? That’s an armageddon sized misunderstanding!”

“… Eh?”

I saw something get up in the corner of my eye. It was Madarai.

“H-How?”

“That kick shouldn’t have sent him back so far. He was using his own strength to be thrown back as well. So he could minimize his injuries. It was just because I was going easy on him to begin with.”

SCREEEEEEEEEEEEEECH

I could hear the grinding sound of scraping metal. Madarai was grinding his teeth enough to cause sparks.

“Oh, are you angry… ? Are you angry at someone… ?”

I directed my attention in front of me, at Madarai. An unsteady voice came from behind me, in Enoshima-san’s direction.

“It’s fine, there’s no way you can lose against that guy… probably.”

“At least try to sound more convinced!” I said, looking over everything I wrote down.

“Don’t look away.” Enoshima-san’s harsh voice lectured me, “Don’t look away from your prey. That’s one of the basics.”

“Huh, prey…” In contrary, I’d rather think it’s my side that’s the prey. While grinding his teeth, Madarai reached out to us and moved closer. He was giving off an aura of bloodthirst like a hungry viper, I felt like an intimidated rabbit, trembling.

In this kind of situation, Enoshima-san is really the only one I can rely on.

“Wha?” Madarai’s eyes suddenly widened. “W-When did…”

When did what? I did not like the sound of those words. I looked behind me fearfully.

“.....”

What did she say it was again? I looked at my notebook again and remembered. That’s right, I know now.

“... That was Shukuchi, wasn’t it?”

When I looked behind me there wasn’t anyone there. Without realising it, Enoshima Junko’s figure, shape and shadow was gone.

“Looks like you’ve been left behind.” It was a voice from behind me. Looking back in front of my I saw Madarai. He looked down at me with tenacity. “But there’s no one to blame for it. I’ll just have to deal with her later. The order has just changed… that’s all.”

His words were like a death sentence, I finally noticed my own basic mistake. I was idiotically relying on Enoshima Junko. So I’m not really complaining about it. In any case, I have to do something!

I looked doubtfully to where I dropped my notebook. I heard Madarai’s voice.

“... Oy, why do you keep looking at that notebook?”

“U-Uhm… that’s…” I couldn’t lift my face. My mind went blank and I forcibly flicked through the notebook. With how things were now, I couldn’t find a good way to escape. I tried my best to stall for time.

“P-Please wait a moment. Your purpose is to investigate The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History, isn’t it? I don’t think it’ll do any good questioning me on it. Since I know nothing about the inci-”

“Why do you know it’s name?” Madarai’s cold voice made me flinch and tremblr.

“W-What do you mean?”

“Earlier I only referred to it as “that incident”. Why do you know

about The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History?"

I raised my face timidly, Madarai glared at me with a growing intensity. I looked back at my notebook immediately to escape from his gaze.

"T-That's… well, um… I only just heard about it myself… I-I didn't know it was an actual thing…"

"In the first place, as far as the name "The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History", only a few people in this school know. The fact that you talked about it with no hesitation means you really are suspicious. Looks like I really hit the jackpot."

I didn't have to look to know, his reptile-like cruel eyes were smiling. A shiver went down my spine. My cold limbs went stiff and I was completely paralyzed.

This is the end.

This was probably the first time since my birth that I was fully conscious of my death. My head went completely blank and-

Matsuda-kun.

I really do love him.

Even if I do say that though, memories like a revolving lantern never

came into my head. My memories for him are just feelings I have after all. So I whispered his name in my mind and tried to remember…

Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun…

Huh?

Um, let's try that again.

Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun… Matsuda-kun…

… Huh… ?

It's weird, I don't feel any better.

"I can't… remember… ?"

My whole body felt fuzzy. The fact that I couldn't remember Matsuda-kun anymore, that brought on an unprecedented attack of fear and loneliness.

Is this a feeling of loss from forgetting Matsuda-kun?

It was an awful feeling I had never felt before, like I had been sent to the depths of hell. It was an awful feeling, as if my body was being eaten away by a thousand evil monsters.

“What’s wrong? Your face has gone white.”

“… Eh?” I looked up at Madarai’s face and finally understood. The man in front of me had made me so scared, right now I can’t control my emotions at all. Because of that, I can’t remember my feelings for Matsuda-kun at all.

“You look like you’re about to be attacked.” He laughed at his own awful joke.

Matsuda-kun, Matsuda-kun.

Even though I was completely overcome by fear, I continued to repeat his name in my mind. But I tried not to show my fear. I desperately whispered his name over and over again. Like a prayer, I repeated his name with my emotions.

I want to see Matsuda-kun’s face. I want to hear Matsuda-kun’s voice. I want to smell Matsuda-kun’s scent. I want to touch Matsuda-kun. I want to meet Matsuda-kun. I want to meet Matsuda-kun. I want to meet Matsuda-kun.

Then suddenly…

My heart leapt and thumped heavily and my blood pumped through my body at breakneck speed. I felt warm and my limbs frozen from fear were once again able to move.

I want to meet Matsuda-kun.

I kept on muttering that small phrase, and the fear I had melted away.

I want to meet Matsuda-kun! I want to meet Matsuda-kun! I want to meet Matsuda-kun!!

"... I want to… meet Matsuda-kun…"

"...Hm?" Having noticed my strangeness, Madarai took a moment to distance himself from me. Perhaps he's just cautious by nature. I calmly analyzed and thought about the situation. Remaining collected, I re-read the notebook quickly in my head. I suddenly looked at the first page. I could see "a certain ability" I had written down. I wonder why I never noticed it before. This is surely the power of love Matsuda-kun and I hold!

I'll meet Matsuda-kun! I'll meet Matsuda-kun! I'll meet Matsuda-kun!

It wasn't just a desire anymore, it was my entire purpose now, I felt warmer just thinking about it.

"... You, move now." I raised my head from my notebook and stared at Madarai, "I'm going to meet Matsuda-kun!"

"Who's "Matsuda-kun"... What's with this sudden change in character?"

"It's love of course!" I triumphantly yelled out. "It's the power of the love I have for Matsuda-kun!" I cried out without any shame.

“Erm, the power of love and all that is great… it drives people to do insane things at stupid times … But, even after all that, I don’t really understand you at all.”

“… In any case, you’re being a nuisance.” As I said that I glared daggers at Madarai.

“… Are you just desperate or something? This is a little awkward. Desperate people are always unpredictable at the best of times. No matter whether they’re strong or weak, they’re always a hassle to deal with.”

“It’s fine, just move.”

“Yeah… I don’t get you at all.” He leaned forward and dropped his centre of gravity. He must be preparing to attack. But that’s…

Not my problem.

He can’t extinguish my red hot fire.

I will meet Matsuda-kun! I will meet Matsuda-kun! I will meet Matsuda-kun!

I had decided, so with my notebook still open, I stepped forward completely defenceless. Madarai responded by lowering his centre of gravity further and drew his fist back to his waist. He was ready. Though, despite being at the ready, it didn’t seem like he was going to make the first move. He was just being very wary. He really does

have a cautious personality.

But…

No, seeing as…

I stopped in mid-stride and declared,

“Madarai Isshiki, checkmate!”

“What do you mean, that’s a pretty lame line.”

“… Madarai Isshiki, it’s checkmate!!” I couldn’t think of anything else to say so I just repeated my line.

I was a like a wild animal about to pounce on my prey, and so I lowered my centre of gravity. I remained in that posture and pushed all the power I had into my legs until I couldn’t anymore.

All at once I released it!

I kicked on the ground with my all the strength I had and began to run with explosive force in the opposite direction Madarai had prepared for.

“H-Hey!!”

I left behind the surprised Madarai as he raised his puzzled voice and ran after me. As I heard that voice I opened my notebook again and checked the first page for the “my ability” written there.

That’s right, that’s what my ability is. I can use it to get me out of this situation. I couldn’t remember it before so I didn’t realise I had one.

After a while I could hear footsteps behind me, chasing me.

Maybe I should try out predicting something. If I could predict what that guy following me is thinking right now, I bet he would be thinking something like…

I don’t get that girl at all.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 7

“I don’t get that girl at all.”

Madarai Isshiki muttered to himself as he was running. It wasn’t that he was not being careful, it was the opposite of that. It didn’t even cross his mind that she might run away. But thinking about it again now, it’s only natural that she would take that course of action.

They say a cornered rat will bite the cat but in truth it’s doubtful anyone has ever seen a rat bite a cat. Even if it were seriously injured or dying, it would not just stay motionless while cornered, it would run for it’s life. Since the rat has “his eyes on a goal” in that respect.

It’s the very same for that girl running in front of him. She’s running because she has her eyes on her own goal.

“... So then, if I apprehend her, it’ll be over.” He smiled cruelly. He had the face of a hunter chasing after his prey.

After I catch her I’ll beat all the information she knows about “that incident” out of her.

The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History.

Madarai hated that incident and all those involved in the incident with a burning passion. Now, Madarai had a deep drive to avenge what happened in the incident. Finally, the chance to do so was finally in his reach.

He had received information from a suspicious informant just a few hours earlier. Enoshima Junko, a girl who knows what happened, will appear at the Central Plaza. The chance of it being a trap was high, but he was willing to risk it. Even if it was a trap, he would then at least manage to see who it was who set the trap. That was his line of thinking anyway.

I will avenge them without a doubt.

So I can protect them, I will avenge them.

There was a spark in Madarai's eyes. As soon as his eyes spotted the target running in front of him, he sped up dramatically. His long hair flew behind him as the distance between him and his target closed. In next to no time, he was at a point where if he reached out his hand he would be able to catch them.

This is the end.

He stepped harshly on his right foot and threw his long right arm out as far as it would reach. His fingertips grazed lightly against their hair, for only for a moment.

It was then, as his hand brushed against their hair that they suddenly changed direction. Surprised, he lost his balance. They had perfectly timed their chance to change direction.

"..... Tch!" Madarai clicked his red tongue, straightened his posture and began to run after his target once again. However he noticed immediately, the girl ahead of him seemed to be running strangely.

“…. What…. is that…..” As his target was running, they were writing something in their notebook. “Huh….. ?”

She’s writing while running?

It’s impossible, that can’t be it.

Madarai’s mind was nothing short of confused. He was unable to understand their behaviour at all. The idea of “The target has no other choice than flee” was in itself unexpected.

That girl isn’t just a rat trying to escape?

She’s thought of different ways to escape?

It was possible they were simply bluffing. Ever since they first started running, they might have just been using caution as a way to widen the gap.

No, it doesn’t matter what the reason is, he didn’t have time to think about it.

To avenge The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History. With intense motivation he had no time to lose. Madarai furiously increased his speed and was once again close enough to catch his target.

This time, it really is the end.

He reached out his right hand again and grabbed them from their blind spot.

No, the only thing he grabbed was air. Once again, his target waited until the last second and suddenly turned and ran in another direction. Unable to stop with the extra momentum Madarai saw a large tree in front of him in the darkness. Quickly he thrust his hands in front of him and the rough bark of the tree dug into them.

What the hell!

Madarai picked a direction, kicked the ground and sped off. He was quickly close enough to the target yet again to touch them, he once again reached out however, the target dodged the hand and fled.

I can't catch her?

Madarai became aware of that for the first time. Though, he did not know the reasons why. Firstly, they were looking at their notebook for the entire time while running, how were they able to see the hand behind them? In any case, he had reached every time with perfect timing.

They should have been completely oblivious to any movement behind them. No, that's not it. They should not have had the skills capable of seeing behind them.

It's almost like she knows what will happen before it happens.

“You’ve gotta be kidding me…” Shaking off his thoughts, Madarai started running at full speed once more.

He quickly reached his target once again, they left their blind spot wide open and so he reached out again. He was almost touching them until they yet again avoided the hand and ran away. But, it was almost like they anticipated it. Madarai mimicked them and reversed his movement as they had. With both hands open, he jumped towards the target. Utilizing his two hands he tackled.

This time I have you!

That is to say, the target disappeared completely.

“... What?”

It was as though they were reading Madarai’s movements and then dodging them. With perfect timing they bent down at their waist and crouched on the ground like a turtle. They had let Madarai jump over them. Awkwardly Madarai fell down onto the hard ground in front of him. Lying on the lawn he found himself unable to move for a short time. He did not feel any pain however he was somewhat injured.

“What… the hell…”

Madarai finally forced himself up from the lawn. He looked around for his target, his long hair a mess. He managed to catch sight of their back growing smaller in the distance. As he watched them in the distance Madarai muttered to himself in an incredulous tone.

“……. For god’s sake, please don’t tell me she’s clairvoyant or something.”

Print
A Web Document from Box

Clairvoyance?

He was probably thinking something like that, but of course I know that sort of thing doesn't exist. No, it was real but only in dreams, no matter how much you wanted it to be real life, things like being able to awaken psychic powers in a critical situation is something that would come straight out of a shounen manga.

So it's not anything as unbelievable as clairvoyance.

It was just a simple prediction.

I'm able to analyze his thoughts, actions and movements. After all, I was able to confirm my own ability with the help of my notebook.

Super Analyser.

Using that ability I was able to statistically analyze Madarai's behavioral patterns and way of thinking. From there I predicted the actions he took afterwards. But even after saying that, analysis requires vast amounts of data. If I had no data I would not be able to predict his actions.

But, it's all thanks to "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook".

Due to Madarai's actions and behavior I was able to use the data I had

written down in the notebook and predict his actions. In particular, the fight between Enoshima-san and Madarai had become a goldmine of valuable information. She had used various attacks against Madarai and in response Madarai had reacted in a variety of ways. Considering all that into detail now, I had seen all his actions and attack patterns. As for the reason of why Enoshima-san would go to such lengths, to be truthful I had no idea. Anyhow, it was thanks to that data that I am now able to grasp Madarai's behavioral patterns.

Having said that, only a few minutes of watching him fight did not mean I could predict everything he would do. However, for now my only goal was to predict how he would act in this situation. I had enough data to do that at least. I was currently easily able to predict when he would attempt to reach me, from what angle and how he would do it.

But even after all my predictions, he was still not willing to give up.

I'm sure, after seeing my ability in full throttle just now he was stunned to say the least. This is just another prediction but soon he'll realise that the cause of such a phenomenon was simply my notebook. But he'll probably keep chasing me all the same. If so, he will begin running more seriously.

If he does, what are my options?

Along with the answer, it should come into view soon. While I continued my predictions, I looked at the sketch in my notebook of the Central Plaza to guide me as I ran. After going through a thick area of trees, I entered a wide clearing. As I had suspected, in the distance I could see a small building. That was the place where I was headed. As I found my destination, fear and courage swirled in my mind.

But, I have to do it. Forget about the fear and anxiety and just do it. Do it for the sake of meeting Matsuda-kun.

I'll do it. I'll do it without a doubt!

By the way, that wasn't a prediction. That was just my happy-go-lucky side shining through.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 9

There must be a secret in that notebook, that's the conclusion Madarai had come to.

Yes, that must be it. There's no such thing as clairvoyance. If caught, everything would fall under pressured circumstances however they persistently write in their notebook, meaning, they must have some sort of secret. Though he did not know what kind of secret.

In that case, I must destroy that notebook no matter what.

Originally, Madarai was not the type of person to have complex thinking patterns and thought structures. Despite how he may look, he's been told he has a cautious personality, though he wasn't always this way, it had just been something he had to become in order to continue with his responsibilities.

However, even after becoming what he is, his responsibilities have lost their meaning.

But, that's my fault.

It's my fault I didn't protect them.

Now his only responsibility was the find the culprit behind The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History and exact revenge.

“That’s why… I can’t just stand around doing nothing.” Madarai began running again. Everything after this point should be simple enough.

I’ll catch the target, beat her and force the truth from her.

In defiance of Madarai, his target ran away from him as fast as they could. He fell behind somewhat but not too far. Even if they ran, he just needed to chase after them. As long as he didn’t give up, there would be no end.

Catch, beat, truth.

Madarai repeated it to himself, confirming what he would do. He slithered through the dim, overgrown bushes and trees as if he were a black snake. He looked around carefully and spotted a clearance. It looked like an area of open space. Looking around he could see a small prefabricated hut on the other side of the area. Near the straw next to the hut was a flickering light. The entire atmosphere given off by the hut made him feel as if he were in a horror movie.

It’s too suspicious to be suspicious.

No, that makes it perfect...

“... For someone who’s lost to take refuge in.” Madarai slowed down, he carefully walked to the prefabricated hut. It had cream coloured roof and walls that would under other circumstances give a calming feeling but when being lit by a flickering light they only gave off a sick feeling.

Madarai stood in front of the small prefabricated hut and carefully looked through the window to examine the state inside. As the light continued to flicker on and off, dust from inside the hut got into his eyes. This was probably a shed for the Central Plaza. There were things like paint cans and fertilizers placed on the shelves inside as well as cleaning tools spread around the room. He couldn't see anyone inside but the hut was filled with hiding spots.

Madarai backed away from the window and turned to the entrance. The door was a thin, small, wooden hinged door. He placed his fingertips lightly on the doorknob and after asserting that there was no trick mechanism he held the knob more firmly.

However it would not open, it needed a key.

Madarai knelt down where he was standing and examined the surrounding weeds. Most of them reached up to his ankles but there were the occasionaly few which were bent at the tip. Most likely evidence someone stepped on them recently.

It's decided then.

However he still looked conflicted and with little peace of mind. In contrary, the cautiousness he had forgotten a moment ago he remembered once more.

So, what kind of trap are you waiting for me to walk into?

Madarai took in another deep breath and exhaled. He turned towards the door and kicked it with all his strength.

BANG!

With a dull sound, the door opened slightly.

BANG! BANG!

He kicked the door several times in quick succession and the door opened wide enough to allow a human to pass through. It looked like a dark hole. Madarai bent down and entered.

“Excuse me…”

He stepped on some sand and the sound of silence rippled around the room. The structure was larger than he thought it was. The light flickering from outside the window was the only source of illumination in the room. In the corner there was a spider web, stretched finely. Across the room from the window was shelf placed against the wall, on it were a rows of paint cans. Small clumps of dust and gravel were spread across the floor and there were cleaning and maintenance equipment placed randomly throughout the room. Towards the back of the area were several large bags filled to the brim with fertilizer.

“Hey, I know you’re hiding somewhere in here!” Madarai’s voice echoed through the warehouse and he redirected his line of sight. Behind a pile of burlap sacks he thought he saw “something” small move. Like it was a reaction to his voice. Perhaps something scared and-

She’s there.

With his guard up, Madarai inched towards the sacks. There must be a trap there. When you really get down to it, a warehouse is going to

be filled to the brim with weapons. In Madarai's mind he thought he could see a figure trembling behind the sacks in the darkness.

"... What are you plotting?" He asked in a hushed voice and continued to proceed through the room. By the time he had reached the centre of the room his eyes had completely readjusted to the darkness.

"Well, if it's a fight you want I'm happy to accomodate." Madarai said with a heartless voice and an unaffected expression. "But if you do, you'll regret it. You'll only feel pai-!!??"

In that moment, he couldn't understand what happened at all. He felt something hit his face and his vision went blank.

".... Ku!" While groaning he opened his eyes slightly to try to see what happened. He was surrounded by a white fog.

"... Hya!"

In front of him stood someone on the other side of the burlap sacks, throwing clumps white dust at him. The clumps hit him hard and disintegrated into hundreds of small particles falling around him. As the girl finished her throw she shoved her hand back into the bag in front of her and grabbed another mound of white powder to throw at him.

"Hya! Hya!"

He stood there, surprised with his mouth hanging open. It was hardly what one could call a fight, it was nothing but a childish game. Like a snowball fight, but using this white powder as a substitute for snow.

“What the… fuck…” Madarai’s face changed to an angered expression. To waste his time on something so idiotic, his line of thinking went along that as he straightened to his full height.

I’ve had enough, it’s time to end this foolishness.

The flickering from the outside light reflected brightly through the room. He was interrupted before he could continue any further.

“... Do you know what a dust exploion is?” As Madarai began to move once more she raised her voice. Madarai stopped walking and stood still unintentionally.

“If there were a fire in this situation… what do you think would happen?”

“W-What would…”

At the moment there was white powder floating throughout the entire warehouse. Madarai suddenly realised, if there was a fire, in an instant it would travel from one particle to another and soon spread through the entire warehouse.

“... If you did that, wouldn’t you be caught in it too?”

“... I’m pretty much screwed either way, aren’t I?”

As he heard that, Madarai remembered his own words.

Desperate people are always unpredictable at the best of times.

Madarai squinted, trying to see clearer through the white mist. Past the dust he could see the silhouette of a woman though he could not see her face. As the dust settled he was finally able to see her expression more clearly.

She was staring without a hint of emotion. Unable to peek past her facade he couldn't help but feel intimidated.

"Who are you…" That wasn't the scared face of his target trying to escape. She stared at Madarai without so much as blinking. Chills went down his spine.

"You have no reason to do this… in the first place, you can't start a fire here."

"....."

The girl was silent. Sweat clung to his skin as the tension in the atmosphere grew heavier. His mood grew darker as he felt the atmosphere attack him.

Who the hell is… this girl.

The girl in front of Madarai stared without any expression at his own scared face.

Should I run? Strike first?

The two choices spun around his head, around and around, over and over. At that point he noticed his target's eyes changed direction. He looked over to where she was looking out of instinct. On the floor he saw a vacuum cleaner used for industrial purposes and immediately next to it was a power outlet.

That power outlet… it could create a spark!

As if his brain was playing the word association game, thoughts streamed through his head. Madarai was soon aware he was moving.

There's no room for hesitation!

Not even any warning!

Be faster than that woman!

With that, Madarai bolted towards the vacuum cleaner and grabbed the hose with his thin hands firmly, with all his strength he yanked it towards himself and-

And he had a bad feeling.

Something definitely happened.

Something very big happened.

However, the girl didn't so much as flinch. She was standing in the corner of his field of vision, even after Madarai had grabbed the vacuum cleaner with his hands, she didn't take one step. Rather, it seemed more like he did exactly as she had expected.

SHIT!

His bad feeling turned into a "beeline" towards a bad shape.

A trap.

But he saw it too late. A large shadow swayed into Madarai's view. The shadow was the shelf tilting towards him. The paint cans made a rattling sound and slid off the shelf in his direction-

Coming closer.

Just a little closer.

A rumbling sound erupted as dust flew everywhere.

Madarai was crushed under the large, fallen shelf.

Print
A Web Document from Box

There was a deep rumbling sound and a cloud of dust flew up into the air. The paint cans fell on the ground and colourfully dyed the walls and floor as if they belonged in a magical world.

I breathed in the dust even while coughing, as my coughing eased my chest relaxed. After hearing of a dust explosion and seeing the vacuum cleaner there there was no reason for that cautious, strong man to just leave it there. It was the exact result I had predicted.

I opened the window to the warehouse, picked up a shovel that had fallen nearby and went to ask the crushed Madarai a few questions. As I faced him I tried to remain strong, but my legs were trembling and my hands were covered in sweat.

“Hello theeeeeeeeeeere……” Timidly, I looked through the gap under the shelf into it’s depths. Madarai was trapped between the fallen shelf and the ground like the filling in a sandwich. Though it looked like he was still conscious, he looked at me with weak eyes.

“I r-really played into your hands….” It might be just because his chest was being crushed, but his voice sounded strained. “B-But… why wasn’t there an explosion? When the shelf fell…. t-there should have been enough static to create a spark…”

I tightened my grip on the shovel and responded.

“Ah, that powder was cement powder, it’s not flammable….”

“…. Cement powder?”

I readjusted my grip on the shovel so I could open my notebook with my now free hand.

“Uh, let’s see… the requirements for a dust explosion are combustible dust, oxygen and a source of ignition… Cement powder isn’t oxidized so it doesn’t burn. In other words you can’t have a dust explosion without the dust… or something like that.”

“So then… you knew that…”

“It says here the old man who owns this warehouse is awfully talkative… it seems like he enjoys holding very onesided conversations with whoever he sees… and he forces high school girls to listen to his stories? It’s seems like thanks to him I was saved, though I wonder if I should really be greatful…” As I flipped through my notebook I continued to speak. “As it turns out, this old man has an interest in DIY, and enjoys making things himself. So it looks like all the cement powder he buys is stored here.”

“S-So… you mentioned it as a decoy…”

“Yes, so I could get you to tug the vacuum cleaner.” As I continued looking at my notebook I nodded vigorously. “Ah, by the way, have you seen a movie called Home Alone? The trap I used came from that. It’s a gimmick where there’s a rope placed in just the right spot so when you pull the vacuum cleaner, the shelves fall down. Oh yes, and I sprinkled some of the cement powder on the rope to hide it. But since the rope I used was already kind of whi-”

“…. That’s enough.” Madarai interrupted me with his weak voice.

“I-In the end… your real trump was that trick… ?”

“Hmmm, maybe not quite a trump. I mean, at the end of Home Alone it’s actually a passing adult who get’s the finishing blow on the robbers and not Culkin-kun. It’s the same in the sequel as well. So in reality my real trump was for someone to come save me-”

“I get it… so shut it already…” Madarai looked like he was sick of me talking. “B-But… isn’t it still too early to celebrate your victory?”

“…. Yes?” Surprised I made a strange reply and the mood changed. “Um… what do you mean?”

“I s-still… haven’t shown you my trump card… is what I… mean…” As he said those words, Madarai fell into silence.

I tried questioning him some more, but he didn’t respond. It seems like he’s lost consciousness. Left with a somewhat indecisive feeling, I read in my notebook that breathing large amounts of cement powder can leave you with pneumoconiosis, I should get out of here.

As soon as I left the warehouse, the weight lifted off my shoulders and I was left in a refreshing mood.

Well, I can leave it to the security department to deal with him. I bet once they catch that criminal, everything will settle down again. Surely attacking a young girl like me is a crime worthy of expulsion at least, after meeting him-

“….. Ugweh” I heard a sobbing sound, quiet enough to be a small animal. I realised quickly it was me.

My throat squeezed shut. Something rugged had closed around my throat and I couldn’t breathe.

What’s happening?

What’s going on?

In my confused state I somehow became aware there was a jet black telephone pole in front of me.

But why’s there a telephone pole?

To only add to my confusion, when I looked up, at the top of the telephone pole there was a pure white face. I suppose it’s a human face. It looks like a familiar face. I may be forgetful but that is a very familiar face. Because that face is-

The face of the man who was crushed under a shelf just a short time ago, it was Madarai.

“… You looked shocked.”

But he wasn’t injured at all, his clothes didn’t have a speck of dirt or anything on them.

“I know what you’re thinking, you’re thinking ‘Why is the man I

defeated in the warehouse just a short while ago standing in front of me strangling me?'... aren't you?"

Madarai's mouth split into a huge smile.

"Remember that trump I mentioned… This is part of it." He narrowed his eyes and squinted at me. I could see myself reflected in them. "For the time being, I'll just break your arms and legs… it'll be painful but bear with it… But before that I should knock you unconscious. It'd be a bother if you started screaming." He said ruthlessly rather than calmly.

He left no room for me to plead for my life as I vaguely registered what he was saying.

Madarai tightened his hold on my throat further and my consciousness slipped more and more. I could feel myself vanish and I could no longer feel my body.

I can't talk anymore.

I can't breathe anymore.

I can't predict anymore.

My notebook slipped out of my hand, my eyes lost focus and my vision blurred, Madarai distorted into the landscape.

That it, he distorted.

As his body was distorting, it swirled into a spiral. The sky became

the ground and the ground became the sky, only his head stayed the same…. then that crumpled and I fell to the ground with a dull thud.

I watched everything in front of me.

I was dangerously flickering in and out of consciousness like candle, unable to determine if what I saw was real or just a dream, but I was seeing something.

“Ghghghuhh!” Making a sound like a frog, Madarai tumbled down from his position quickly. As soon as he fell down, he leapt back up. His own eyes transfixed on his right arm. Just above his elbow, his arm was twisted strangely, like taffy.

I don’t really know what happened, but Madarai stared at his own arm with a blank face, quickly realization set in and he screamed.

“H… HIGHYAAaaaaAAARGGHHH fghwaaaAAAAAAAA!!!”

A wretched scream filled with confusion, fear and pain ripped from his mouth, and expelled all the air in his body. As I heard his scream, I was in a stupor, standing in the middle of a battlefield. Speaking of which, I’m not really sure if I’m standing or lying right now. I not really sure of anything, I’m not really sure if I heard a voice just now.

“Upupu, I wonder if I was a bit too hard.” The voice said, it sounded close. “... But it can’t be helped. It’d just be embarrassing if you died here. After all, you’re the protagonist in this scene for once!”

That’s when I noticed something. It’s strange, I hadn’t noticed it up until now. A dark shadow was standing in front of me. On the black

silhouette I noticed another familiar face.

But I can't remember.

I can't remember who that is.

"Upupu, you can't remember who I am, can you? I'm absolutely correct, you know. Well, you don't have to worry. If you look deep inside of yourself you'll remember soon enough." It laughed and the voice from the shadow suddenly lowered. "Anyway, before anything else I guess I need to clean up that mess."

After saying that…

Everything began in an instant,

And everything ended in an instant.

First, she placed her hand over Madarai's head, who was still screaming like he was broken. With her hand she started to strok him gently. Madarai looked up surprised, his expression remained as his head made a crunching sound, turning and stopping at a strange angle.

I don't know what she did, but Madarai fell down and lost all his energy. Red froth was foaming out of him at my feet and he convulsed.

Ah, this is a dream.

It was a struggle to keep thinking straight, but for some reason the mood was much more relaxing.

That's right, I've decided.

This scene playing out is too strange to be real, I've decided I must be in a dream.

"Upupupupu" So the reason that laughter is echoing is my eardrums, it's just because this is just a dream.

I noticed the black shadow was standing in front of me again. This isn't any different to a dream either.

"So, I'll remind you of who I am…. That's right, you can call me "Super High School Level Despair" I think. Upupupu." As she said that her familiar face appeared on her shadow.

Her eyes were a much too deep, dark colour. They looked more like holes leading into darkness. As I stared into those holes I felt my consciousness be sucked away. Inside those holes was a pure black bottomless pit filled with mud. I was sucked deeper into it and the mud eroded my body. As it happened, I could hear a voice say in the distance…

"Let's meet up again! Then I'll kill you properly!" It sounded like it was a voice in the distance, but it was a distinct voice whispering in my ear.

What a strange dream.

With that last thought, my consciousness melted into the pit completely, and I disappeared.

Print
A Web Document from Box

Chapter 11

“..... Hm?”

The woman tilted her head to one side.

“.... Hm? Hm? Hm?”

Enoshima Junko tilted her head more to one side.

“Hmmm. It’s nice that I came back and all but… I wonder, just what kind of situation is this?”

She got up from her kneeling position and look in front of her, there was something there.

It was a dead body.

The man’s neck and arm were bent at a strange angle.

“Ummmm, this guy is definitely…” She placed her and hand on her chin and closed her eyes. She posed as if she were a detective solving a great mystery and after just a little hesitation - Enoshima Junko raised her voice as if she was celebrating.

“Ah, I remembered! Right, right, he said his name was Madarai! Looks like even in death I forgot you! I wonder if I’ll end up forgetful too? As if, aha, ahahahahahahaha!”

Enoshima Junko's laughing voice filled the night sky and echoed around the place. As though she was surrounded by several other girls, her voice bounced around and sounded like a chorus of girls laughing.

But, the next moment, her laugher ceased. The girl seemed have grown tired of laughing and put on a bored expression.

"Anyway, where did that other corpse disappear to?" She asked and began laughing again.

She looked bored and cranky only moment ago but now she was laughing a huge smile on her face.

"Well, it doesn't really matter where it disappeared to. Upupu, really I am too good at planning despair-inducing plans~" After saying that she returned to a sullen expression.

"But, I'm so good at planning them, they never go the way I want. Whose fault is this? Who'll take responsibility for this?" After each word she changed her expression. None of them were just her putting on a facade. Each expression carried her true feelings. She felt a despair-inducing weariness, she's that girl after all.

She's "Super High School Level Despair" Enoshima Junko after all.

Enoshima changed back to her gloomy expression, she shuffled over to Madarai's dead body,

“Oy, it’s all your fault. Hey, hey…” Saying that she began to prod the body with the tip of her foot. “Hey… What do you have to say to that… after you were killed by me so easily. Try harder to get in the way of my plan next time, I can’t despair like this.”

Her tone suddenly changed.

“I-It hurts. I’m so sorry~!” She said in a tone of voice similar to what ventriloquists use. She was mimicking Madarai’s voice. “Enoshima-sama. Forgive me~!” She said in a sarcastic voice as she pressed her foot into Madarai. A dark red liquid dribbled from his mouth.

“I’ve died apologising, so please forgive me~!” She once again returned to her own tone of voice. “A dead apology means nothing, since you’re already dead!”

While still majestically prodding him, she squished down his face.

Splatter.

A dull noise that sounded like crunching echoed around.

“Upupupup

First there's that filthy corpse.

And I also need to clear up that warehouse.

"And, finally… get rid of that nuisance of a guy Otonashi Ryouko-chan loves so much." She finished in a confident tone. As she remembered again she began laughing.

"Upupupup

Chapter 12

I finally woke up, and saw a ceiling.

It looks like I somehow fell asleep without realising it. Though, me being as forgetful as I am, I never really remember falling asleep so this wasn't especially panicking. I calmly shifted my gaze from the ceiling to the window. Sunlight beamed through the gap between the curtains and filled the white room with light. It looked like the morning sun.

The room the sun illuminated was completely unknown to me.

But, that's no different to usual. In this situation it's important not to panic, checking what happened with "Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook" takes top priority. Without making a fuss or panicking I slowly rose up - only to find I couldn't.

"..... What is this?" I was held down by a rope tied firmly to the bed. It was a well tied knot that I'm sure some could even call artistic, it didn't loosen even the slightest bit. It was impossible just to move my neck so I could properly look around the room. Then finally - I remembered how to feel scared in this situation.

To be brief, my "What is this?" went to a " WHAT IS THIS!?" very quickly.

"W-WHAT IS THIS?!" But, even during my rampage, the bed only shaked and rattled. The knot showed no sign of untying itself, in fact, if anything it only creaked, growing tighter against me.

“S-Somebody…” I cried out in horror, “H-H-HEEEEEELP MEEEEEEE!” I shouted louder, and then louder after that.

“PLEAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASE!” Screaming and screaming, all I could do was continue screaming.

“SOMEBODYYYYYYYYYYYYYY! SOMEBODYYYYYYYYY!!” I kept screaming like that for a short while.

“Shut up, trash.” Suddenly someone replied in an annoyed tone of voice. Despite the insult, my heart began pounding.

“Eh? Matsuda-kun?”

“You should shout quieter, dumbass.”

“It really is you!” It was the sharp tongue of my beloved Matsuda-kun that I heard, I quickly tried to look around for him - But my head was still firmly bound in place and I couldn’t turn it at all.

“Where are you? Matsuda-kun, where are you?” I raised my voice desperately.

“Where… I’m right beneath you.”

“Huh? Beneath me?”

“I’m under the bed you were sleeping on, you whore.” I ignored the

whore comment for the time being , still, it was a shock he used such language around me.

“Eh? Why are you under the bed?”

“So I can control my frustration and actually concentrate.” I couldn’t really check to see if this was some kind of bondage play, but Matsuda-kun’s voice was definitely coming from beneath me. There’s no mistaking he was under the bed.

“But… what would require so much concentration to be under the bed?”

“This situation.” Somehow, Matsuda-kun’s way of putting it could allure to several different meanings.

“Hey, Matsuda-kun. If there’s anything wrong, you can talk to me about it, okay? I’ll listen.”

“I’ll take you up on your offer.” Matsuda-kun exhaled a long sigh. “Last night I was told a super ugly acquaintance of mine went missing, so I went looking for her and couldn’t find her anywhere. When I came back to the laboratory though there she was sleeping soundly on my bed covered in dirt so, do you think you can understand my frustration here?”

“... Somehow, that sounds like a really bad super ugly friend.”

“It’s you.”

Oh, so it is!

“…. Eh, did you say I went missing?”

“A person who goes missing without realising it really shouldn’t be allowed to walk around freely. It’s a good thing you’re tied up.”

So then, in other words it was Matsuda-kun who tied me up. What a surprise! It’s a complete shocker that he’s able to tie me up like a true craftsman! That’s kind of exciting!

“Anyway, you can stay there for a while and think about your actions.”

“… Incidentally, how long do you mean by a while?”

“I think until the next World Cup would be-”

“Absolutely impossible!!”

“You don’t have a choice. Anyway, I think it would be good if it were at least for today.”

“That’s still too long! People don’t tie their lovers to a bed for full day!”

“Who’s this lover? I’d sooner turn into a squid than become the lover of a pest like you.”

“A p-pest…” His harsh words stabbed me and I lost my will to fight. It seemed like Matsuda-kun really is frustrated over this. After that he went silent.

On top of the bed, I lay silently.

Under the bed Matsuda-kun sat silently.

The awkward atmosphere continued for a while.

“…. Seriously, you’re always like this.” Matsuda-kun sighed after some time.

“… Eh? What do you mean?”

“I just remembered. You’ve done this sort of thing before… Honestly, you’re always getting on my nerves like this.”

“I’m not really sure if I want to hear this or not but… I’ll listen. So, what happened before?”

Matsuda-kun began telling his story. As he slowly and carefully said each word I could see it all in my head.

“It was around the time that you were still pretty early on in Primary School.” I was surprised it was such an old story - but at the same time, I was happy. I’ve been with Matsuda-kun for a long time, and

Matsuda-kun remembered such an old story.

But of course, I didn't remember it, although it's not my fault I can't.

"You were skilled at making sandcastles. Everyone in the park was pretty amazed when you started building a full-fledged sandcastle. It was the Sagrada Família. It was really surprising. Since such a small, little girl was trying to recreate a cathedral. You even knew advanced techniques, like adding water to the sand to make more solid, it took you a full month to build."

"Eh, A full month!"

"The real Sagrada Família took 120 years to build, and even now it's still incomplete. You were trying to recreate it perfectly with sand, so it's not strange that it took you so long."

But, even so, a whole month! I wonder what made me so dedicated to it?

"But no one could believe a Primary School student was making such an amazing sand castle. In fact, by the time you were nearly finished, a lot of people from the neighbourhood came to watch… Well, you never actually finished it."

"Eh, why? Why didn't I finish it?" When I asked, Matsuda-kun replied in a nonchalant tone.

"Someone destroyed it. It was really close to completion too."

“D-Destroyed it… ?” That caught me off guard, someone stepped on it and turned it into nothing more than sandy debris. “W-Why would they?! There’s nothing more cruel than destroying something a little girl puts her heart and soul into!” I yelled with rage burning deep inside me while I was still tied down.

“You were crying a lot over it. I mean, a whole month’s work gone like that.”

“Of course I would have been!” I felt a ferocious amount of empathy for younger me.

“It’s probably not surprising but I was pretty pissed over it and started looking for whoever did it… but no matter how hard I looked I couldn’t find the culprit. Actually, at the time the Sagrada Família was destroyed, you were supposed to be the only one in the sandpit. But there weren’t any other witnesses so the search for the culprit came to a standstill. Even I felt just a little depressed over it… I stared vacantly at the wreckage of the Sagrada Família as I sat on the park bench, then suddenly you appeared out of no where. What was weird though is that you had this huge grin on your face.”

“Ah, I know! I found the culprit, didn’t I!”

“No, that wasn’t it.” He sounded as though it would have been better if that had happened. “You whispered to me, “Don’t tell anyone but it was actually me who destroyed it”.”

“... Huh?” That completely caught me by surprise. “But why would I just destroy a sand castle I had spent the last month making?”

“It’s annoying, isn’t it?”

“I-It’s annoying but… Why would I even do such a thing…”

“I heard everything. It wasn’t just “clumsiness”. If it were you would have said so from the start. No thanks to you I wasted my time looking for a culprit that didn’t exist.”

That means, it wasn’t just “clumsiness”, I ruined a month’s worth of work on purpose - That’s so idiotic. I can’t empathize at all now.

“In the end, I was easily fooled by you. Do you get it now? You can be really infuriating at times.”

“Yup! Even while tied down I’m a complete lost cause!”

“For once I agree with you.”

And thus I was convinced it was a good idea to have me tied down - Though I was still a little reluctant. No, it was a deep reluctance that was too great to express with words.

“Ugggggggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhh.”

“What is it, do you have a stomach ache?”

“... No, I’m just frustrated. Even after hearing about these memories straight from Matsuda-kun’s mouth, I’m just frustrated I’ll forget them again because I can’t write them in my notebook… Ugggghhhh.”

“I put your notebook next to the pillow.”

“Eh, really?” My heart leapt at such an unexpected act of love. “Which side? Left or right? Which side is it?”

“Calm down and look for yourself, you idiot… it’s on your right side.”

On the right to me is my right!

I desperately tried to look to the right of me, straining my muscles to see. Of course, I soon discovered my notebook. “Ah, there!”

I stretched out my neck like a turtle and grabbed a corner with pouted lips. While overusing the muscles in my neck, I managed to somehow open my notebook.

It was a good thing I got it open, but I couldn’t really write in it - while trying to figure out the solution to such a basic problem - my eyes skimmed over a phrase.

“and Enoshima Junko killed-” My handwriting was so messy the letters looked like hieroglyphs. I couldn’t understand what they said next.

“What’s this… Enoshima Junko killed? Is this from a TV program?” As I said that I heard a loud bang and felt something hit the bed.

"... Oy, what'd you say?" Matsuda-kun's voice was suddenly very rigid.

"Eh? Um…" Confused, I strained to look at my notebook again. Another sentence jumped out at me.

"I discovered a dead body in the Central Plaza-"

Dead body?

After spending around three seconds trying to comprehend what those words meant, I screamed.

"A D-D-DEAD BODYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY?" As I tried to get up the rope dug into my skin, "OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW OW!!" I screamed in pain.

But Matsuda-kun asked in the same stiff voice, "Did you say… Enoshima Junko?"

But, I don't know anyone by that name.

"T-That doesn't matter, there's a dead body… I f-found… a dead body! … W-W… W-W-What'll I do… I found a dead body… W-what should I do?"

"It's more important that you answer me. Do you know who Enoshima Junko is?"

More important?

I felt a sense of discomfort in those words. Isn't it weird? How can "that" be more important than discovering a dead body? It's just too unnatural.

"H-Hey… Matsuda-kun," I tried to stop thinking and just ask him. "You seem to really care about this Enoshima Junko person… Have you met before or something… ?" I queried and I heard short, quick breaths coming from beneath the bed.

"Hey, Matsuda-kun-"

"There wasn't a dead body."

"... Eh?"

"If there was a dead body… you'd hear lots of panic around Hope's Peak. There's nothing like that right now."

"T-That's not it… I mean that woman… what was her name again?" I quickly searched through my notebook again. It began to slip from my chest and I couldn't reach it, even while trying my hardest with my neck and tongue stretched out.

"... That's enough. You misunderstood me. That person has nothing to do with either of us. Forget it." There was an air of irritation that floated in those words.

“B-But if you tell me to forget it like that, I’ll definitely start worrying about it… Since it’s written in my notebook, that means it definitely happened…”

“Not Necessarily.”

“… Eh?”

“Finding a dead body… and meeting a woman you don’t know… it sounds more like something that came out of your imagination… They might just be things that you’re misreading as real memories…”

“E-Everything I write in my notebook is real… If I wrote fictional stories in my notebook then they would get mixed up with my real memories.”

“You don’t know if it is or isn’t.”

“Eh?”

“You might really have mixed a fictional story in with your memories.” As he bluntly stated it, my heart clouded over with mist.

“W-Why… would I do that?”

“You always say things like “It has nothing to do with me”... But if that were the case, wouldn’t you feel depressed and lonely? That sort

of thing would definitely start to affect you."

"... Huh?" My breathing became deeper.

"That must be it. You were lonely so you wrote an imaginary stor-"

"I'm not lonely or anything!" I suddenly blurted out.

"So you remember!" Matsuda-kun's muffled voice shouted back from under the bed.

"That's not what I'm saying!" I cried back to him. Matsuda-kun's words were right off target, he doesn't understand me at all - All I could do was shout at him. "I've said it over and over again now and I'll just keep on saying it! I'm fine as long as you're with me! As long as you're here, I'll never be lonely! I'll say it again and again if I have to!"

I breathed unevenly as I shouted at him. I kept crying out to him until my ears were ringing. It might have been unfair to constantly use my forgetfulness to my advantage - But I didn't want to forget Matsuda-kun. That's why, no matter what, I can't forgive him.

"I know I'm forgetful… So why don't you?!" As I said that my voice reverberated around the room - and went silent.

Awkwardly silent.

"Anyway, it's a fake memory." Matsuda-kun mumbled, breaking the

silence. I didn't really know if he was trying to force an end to the subject or not. But I wasn't convinced he was right.

"If it didn't really happen… then I can't trust my notebook anymore… and if I can't trust my notebook then I don't know what I can trust anymore…"

"Believe in me."

"Eh…"

"Believe in me and forget that memory." My heart always thumped hard when I was around him but perhaps now it wouldn't anymore. Now - just for this moment, it wasn't beating any harder than it usually would. The ringing in my ears drowned out my heart's pounding.

There were just two things I could rely on - and now they were clashing against each other violently. I was shaking so much I felt like a boat in the middle of a terrible storm.

"Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook" contained my only memories.

Matsuda-kun was my only connection to the world.

I suddenly was forced to choose between them.

Should I trust in myself? Or trust in Matsuda-kun?

I gave my answer.

“You’ve always been there for me, Matsuda-kun… So you can be my memory…”

Under the bed, Matsuda-kun remained silent. I waited patiently. I waited for his answer.

“I can’t right now.” That was the exact opposite of what I was expecting his reply to be. I was stunned, I could barely piece together a reply.

“You can’t now… so when can you…?”

“... I don’t know.”

“Y-You don’t know…”

“In any case, for now it’s impossible. But I can’t be with you constantly. There are some things I need to do.”

Some things he had to…

So then, he still -

“... That’s right. After all, you need to be concentrating on your

research… That's why, even if I chose Matsuda-kun to rely on… Matsuda-kun can't choose me." I muttered in a disappointed tone.

"That's not it. I-" Matsuda-kun was stopped talking - he was about to say something else. He sat in silence and said nothing more. After a while - I wanted him to say something, anything.

"If you can't do that… then could you at least cure me…" My face burnt hot and the ceiling blurred. Tears fell down my face. My nose was probably running too. My feelings flowed out of me and I couldn't stop them.

"If you can't cure me, then let me forget about you!" My voice wavered as I cried out. "It's hard just being able to remember you anymore! But maybe it'd be better if I forgot everything!"

As I struggled the rope creaked and cut further into my skin. But I didn't care about the pain, and continued crying out.

"It's fine already! Just let me forget! Let me forget about you!"

I heard a rustling sound from under the bed. Immediately after, Matsuda-kun was standing next to me. He looked down at me as I was still sobbing heavily, he didn't say anything. He reached down into his pocket a took out some crumpled tissues, still not saying anything - He gently wiped my face.

I stared at him. His face was unhealthily pale and he had long, narrow eyes. His black hair curved towards his eyes. He had girlish eyelashes. The same pointed chin. Small, thin lips. White, long fingers - This is Matsuda-kun's face.

But, this man's face - somehow it looked lonely.

His expression remained the same as he gently wiped my face.

This atmosphere has become a little scary.

I said to myself silently as I felt a strong sense of regret.

Matsuda-kun-

I mouthed silently and his hands stopped. He withdrew quietly and walked to his desk - I could no longer see him.

"M-Matsuda-kun…" I finally managed to say something.

"... I have an appointment now." Matsuda-kun replied, still not in sight. "I need to look into a student for a little while… I can't miss it."

"... You're going?"

"I'll come back soon. We'll continue our discussion then." Just after he said that I could hear brisk footsteps and finally, I heard the lonely sound of the door shutting.

He's gone.

Print

A Web Document from Box

I let out a sigh and my body seemed to deflate from the sudden lack of air. As my chest tightened I was reminded of something.

“Before leaving, he could have gotten rid of the rope at least.” I said, feeling tired as I struggled under the ropes slightly. But the burning and pain I felt wasn’t caused by the rope. The reason why was obvious. I closed my eyes and tried to fall asleep, so I could escape this suffering, I wanted to forget everything.

With that thought drifting through my mind I slowly melted into dreams.

Slowly, slowly melting…

As if I had been freed of my heavy body, I felt as though I was floating.

Huh?

My conciousness rapidly reappeared and by the time I opened my eyes - I noticed the rope around me had been untied.

“... Matsuda-kun?” As I sat up, I looked around the laboratory. But Matsuda-kun was no where to be found.

So then, how did the rope untie itself?

I wasn't sure if the rope had untied itself over time or perhaps I had a hidden talent for escaping bondages, like a magician. As I pondered over it, I looked around the institute restlessly. I saw an electric kettle at on the back of the desk. Perhaps I should calm myself down a little by drinking some tea.

While I hosted the thought, I poured some hot water into a teapot. I could smell the gentle scent of green tea. I poured a proper portion into a cup and took a slow sip. The hot, dark liquid flowed down from the back of my throat to my stomach. I finally calmed down.

"Looks like you've finally calmed down."

"... Eh?" Before I knew it, a strange boy was standing right in front of me. "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!" Surprised I dropped my teacup suddenly - and it hit my foot. "OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOW!!"

I writhed in agony.

"Ahaha! You're pretty clumsy, big sis!"

"W-Who? Who are you?!" As I was still in pain, the boy laughed innocently at my question.

"Hm? Forgotten already? Even after I introduced myself last night?"

Introduced himself last night?

I dragged my numb, throbbing foot behind me as I limped pitifully to the bed and I opened up “Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook” which I had placed there.

“Ah! I got it!” I remembered, “Last evening, you were the one I asked to leave a message to Matsuda-kun in the dormitory…”

“Ding Dong, correct! I’m Kamishiro Yuuto from Hope’s Peak Academy’s 77th batch!”

“But, when did you get in here?”

I hadn’t noticed him enter at all.

“Well of course you didn’t notice me enter at all!” Kamishiro-kun chuckled out as he sat on top of the desk, “But you know, ‘When did you get here?’ is the completely wrong question to ask.”

“… Eh? What do you mean?” As I replied, Kamishiro-kun grinned more.

“I mean, I’ve been here all along.”

“A-All along…”

“To be exact, ever since Matsuda Yasuke tied you down with the rope, big sis. I listened to that lover’s quarrel you were having later and

everything. Anyway, that rope was tied pretty well! I'll have to ask him to teach me sometime!"

"Um, so then…" I began trying to fully understand everything in my head, "You've been hiding in this lab, you were hiding to spy on Matsuda-kun and I?"

"How rude! I'm not a pervert, I don't do perverted things like hiding to perv on people, I'm not a pervert!" He puffed out his cheeks, I don't know if he was really angry though.

"But if you weren't hiding wouldn't we have noticed? I mean, it wasn't just me in here, Matsuda-kun was here too…"

"Seriously, you still don't get it? Fine, I'll say it more clearly!" Kamishiro-kun gestured to his chest and announced in a loud voice, "You didn't notice me because of my talent, big sis. My talent is 'Super High School Level Secret Agent'!" If he puffed out his chest anymore he would have ended up falling backwards.

"Super High School Level… Secret Agent?"

"Yeah, like '007' or 'Mission Impossible'... Everyone's seen those movies at least once, haven't they? I'll watch them with you if you want… The point is they're about spies!"

"Spies… ?" Even though I couldn't remember seeing any of those movies, he didn't really give the impression of a spy.

"People have been telling for a long time that I have no real sense of presence… Like a table or chair in a room." As he said that,

Kamishiro-kun grabbed a melon bread from out of a pocket - though it was a mystery how on earth his pocket had enough space for that - and nibbled at it before continuing, “When I was a kid I used to hate my lack of presence… But, then I noticed something. Why not make my downfall my own talent. I mean, if I have no presence then doesn’t that mean I won’t be noticed by anyone? I’d be an amazing spy or ninja. There weren’t any drawbacks. I was gifted this talent from the very heavens! I could use this ability of mine to save the world and become a super spy!!” As he finished he stuffed the rest of the melon bread into his mouth.

“In short, you weren’t really hiding from us. Simply put, we just didn’t really notice you, right?”

He chewed and gulped it all down. “Hmm, that’s it!” He smiled widely.

“The reason I came here was to fulfill the promise I made to you… But when I got here, you were already here with Matsuda Yasuke so I thought to myself that maybe I wouldn’t be required to deliver the message anymore. But I realised it’d be a waste to just leave after all the effort I put into getting here, so I decided I’d stay and watch.”

“You used your ability so you could watch…” I frowned, “Why?”

“Of course, in case some trouble came your way.” Kamishiro turned to me and gave me a look not blending with his young appearance, he glared at me with burning passion. “Now you’ve seen my talent, you understand, right? I can collect information and solve any case... No matter what the trouble might be, I’m the type of guy who likes to really aim for big things. Like an immortal terrorist who has stolen some nuclear warheads and planted them somewhere, that kind of trouble… Aha, it’s exciting just to imagine that sort of thing!” As he said that, Kamishiro-kun’s body begun to shiver with excitement. Madness oozed out of his innocent appearance.

“You are weird, aren’t you…”

“Of course! If I weren’t I wouldn’t have come to this school…” He seems to be honest at least. This is Hope’s Peak Academy - and I should be the same.

“So, what’ll you do? Don’t you think the more the merrier? After all, I’m a specialist for specialists. I’m a pro at gathering information.” As he said that, Kamishiro-kun took another sweet bread from his blazer pocket - I guess they must really work as good storage space - and suddenly stopped moving.

“What the heck, peanut butter bread! Yuck!” Kamishiro-kun drooped his shoulders disappointedly.

“Peanut butter bread doesn’t taste nice? … It looks delicious.”

“What are you saying, Big sis?! Peanut butter bread is the spawn of hell itself! It’s like eating miso and rice together!” Rather than understand him any better, it became a painful process to coherently process what he meant.

“Yes, I see!” I couldn’t be bothered arguing about it so I just agreed.

“Aha, I’m glad we understand each other! Let me give you this!” He passed me the sticky peanut butter bread and thrust his hand into his pocket, getting out another sweet bread. “Wow! A madeira cake made with Yamazaki whisky!” This time he hit the jackpot. He had a huge smile on his face as he was munching it.

“Fhwee, haga fwha foh?”

“... eh, what did you say?”

Kamishiro-kun quickly swallowed down his meal.

“So, what’ll you do?” He asked me flatly with scarily serious eyes. “I mean, unless you think there’s no way I’d help you. You see, I’m not the type who would just ignore a damsel in distress, now am I? When you’re drowning, you don’t just want some people to gather around singing about peace of life and harmony. If you’re in some kind of trouble then just leave it up to me, big sis. Because I’m a person who lives for the sake of solving cases. I mean our situation is similar to how a penis fits in a vagina. People in trouble meet people who solve trouble... If we assume that, then we won’t even have to wait for a solution, right? Seeing as how I’ve already ejaculated the reason.”

“W-W-Wait a second!” I hurriedly cut him off, “Um… did you just go out of character?”

“Hmm, not really.” Kamishiro-kun said and laughed, “Perhaps… it was your imagination…”

His odd phrases bugged me a little but - I suppose it really was my imagination. I wasn’t listening properly. Yes, that must have been it.

“So, what’ll you do? You can’t just solve your problem by floundering around confused, now can you? Go ahead and take the plunge, you can rely on me, can’t you?”

“Trouble…” In order to help understand my situation I reviewed my

notebook. I had completely forgotten just what kind of trouble I was in by this point. As I read the notebook back to myself, my painful throbbing intensified and -

I quickly closed the notebook.

What will I do! What will I do! What will I do! What will I do! What will I do!

It was more irrational than just irrational. What I had found myself caught in was more abnormal than just an abnormal situation. No matter how much I looked through “Otonashi Ryouko’s Memory Notebook” there was no way I’d find something to rival this abnormal situation.

It was a clear lack of data.

A apparent lack of experience.

What will I do! What will I do! What will I do! What will I do! What will I do!

I thought as I hastily raised my head and I met the eyes of a boy eating his sweet bread.

“Looks like you’ve decided.”

“... Eh?”

“So then, why not tell me what happened that led you up to your current situation!” He read my gaze and his mood completely changed. But there was no way to be sure. If I could not do it myself, perhaps I should rely on others - it was a simple theory that worked well enough.

Others - people who weren’t Matsuda-kun.

It had finally come to a time where I needed to rely on others.

“Hey, what’s wrong? Hurry up and tell me! Tell me, tell me!”

“R-Right… I will…” As if he were a puppy wanting to be fed, I rushed over to him and opened my notebook. But before I explained my trouble - I explained my “forgetfulness”.

“... Whoa, I can’t say I’m jealous but that definitely is interesting.” As Kamishiro-kun listened, his looked more as though he had found a rare foreign treasure. I continued to explain that my old memories had been stolen and that I had found a dead body in the Central Plaza and how I met Enoshima Junko.

As I continued to recount all the events written in my notebook my voice began to shake and Kamishiro-kun meekly squinted as he listened. As I finished my story he finally opened his mouth.

“... Hmm. I couldn’t have just heard Enoshima Junko’s name could I have?”

Huh? I feel like someone else had that reaction recently too.

“Are you surprised I reacted more to Enoshima Junko’s name than to the dead body? Matsuda Man reacted the same way just a short time ago. Ahaha, I guess it’s true that you’re unusually forgetful, big sis! Amazing, amazing!”

“… It’s troubling you’re impressed by that.” What I said was true - I can only hope he takes it to heart.

“Well, I’ve grasped the rough situation now. Since I’m a super spy, a dead body isn’t really all that surprising… But that being said, it’s still a strange situation. Especially when that Enoshima Junko person is involved… a very weird situation indeed. Hm, you were right, big sis. Good thing you came to me for help.”

“Could it be, you know that Enoshima Junko person, Kamishiro-kun?” I clearly expressed my tone.

“Yeah, well I don’t know her directly. But I feel like perhaps this was fate. Moreover, I’ve really hit bingo.”

“… Yes?”

“But you know, so far everything has played out so perfectly, like a Hollywood movie. However, I believe I’ll have to take over as the protagonist in the story. From this point on, in order to solve your problem, it’s turned into a thrilling spy story.”

“By thrilling don’t you mean old.”

“Ahaha, don’t strain your brain.” Having said that, Kamishiro-kun thrust his hand into his pocket again and got out another sweet bread, “Alright! A chocolate swirl bread!” He cried out before continuing with his description.

“I’ve also started to look into a somewhat ‘unrelated case’... I know Enoshima Junko’s name because she popped up in the ‘unrelated case’ investigation. However, she wasn’t a key person so I figured she didn’t matter… But, if she’s also related to your problem then that makes it a different story. Since it’s too much of a coincidence to be involved in both of these cases I’m investigating.”

Kamishiro-kun’s eyes glistened. They ignited as he spoke more about this troublesome issue.

“By the way, are you curious by this ‘unrelated case’? Hmmmm? You are, aren’t you?”

“Y-Yeah… I am…” As Kamishiro-kun pressed more I simply gave in and replied supportively.

“Whatever shall I do? I’m not really supposed to talk about this to unrelated people…” He spoke with an all important attitude. “Well, whatever!” But after all that he just decided to go ahead with it anyway. What a troublesome guy!

“Well, you see… firstly, it may be a little to subtle to call it an ‘unrelated case’.”

“... Eh, what do you mean?”

“There may be a connection between them… is what I mean.”

A connection?

Does that mean these two incidents are actually one?

“To be truthful, I think it might be better if I explained this ‘unrelated case’ to someone else… Since it’s pretty dangerous, it’s possible something might happen.” After finally finishing his over-the-top introduction he began to pace around the room. He acted like a detective explaining a great mystery.

“I mentioned ‘another case’... it’s more widely known as ‘The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History’.”

As soon as he said that, my heart began pounding as if it were exploding repeatedly.

Huh? What is this?

The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History - the name itself was ridiculously absurd and yet - I had reacted somehow to his words. I felt an enormous weight on my shoulders as I flicked through my notebook, my thought process had come to a complete hault.

“What’s the matter, big sis?” I came to the realization Kamishiro-kun was looking at my face. “You somehow look a little pained… do you need some kahlua or whiskey?”

“N-No, I’m fine… It’s nothing…” I took in some deep breaths and calmed my nerves.

“So, are you curious about… The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History? Well, are you? Are you curious about it?”

“Y-Yeah… I am…” After more prompting from Kamishiro-kun I reluctantly answered yet again.

“Yes, well you see…” Kamishiro-kun began as he closed his eyes and held his hands up in an impressive pose, “I’m not really sure of the details myself.”

“Y-You don’t know?” I had a nasty habit of interrupting the story, and as I was about to complain before he continued.

“I mean, it’s just a rumour so far.”

“A rumour… ?”

“So far I’ve only heard rumours about it. If it really did happen, it’s still under investigation. Right now, it’s kind of more like one of the seven wonders of the school. The name ‘The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History’ was something someone just gave it.”

“I s-see…” For a moment I thought it was something serious - I sighed a breath of relief and lowered my shoulders-

“Wait, isn’t it still too early to relax over it?” Kamishiro-kun said as he narrowed his gaze at me. “Just because it’s a rumour doesn’t mean there isn’t some truth behind it. If it is true… then that’s even more outrageous. It makes this rumour even more risky. That’s why I think it’s better not to just loosen up over it.”

The throbbing in my chest began to pound again.

“This rumour is pretty big and nobody knows who started it. Perhaps they, themselves, were trying to stop the rumour from being spread… In short, it’s a very dangerous rumour. That’s why it might be better if I told you too.” As he said that I suddenly preferred not hearing about it. That was my honest opinion. But even so I couldn’t stop him.

“But if you say you still want to know, then there’s nothing I can do! I must tell you!” He already assumed my assurance.

“So then, The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History is…” As he said that Kamishiro-kun coughed in a very theatrical manner. “Fifteen Hope’s Peak Academy students going missing suddenly, and then the discovery of thirteen dead… That is The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History.”

I was taken aback. It was too strange, too bizarre, it didn’t contain a hint of realism.

“It’s just a rumour… isn’t it… ?” I asked Kamishiro-kun, trying to confirm, he shook his head slightly.

“If it were ‘just a rumour’ then why would I bother investigating it?”

“B-but…”

“Actually, apparently it’s true. Some students are Hope’s Peak Academy have gone missing.” Kamishiro-kun replied in a hushed voice, as if he were in a secret meeting. “The rumour started about a month ago, at the same time fourteen of our students here were invited to study overseas… suspicious, right?”

“So by chance the same amount of people went missing… Ah, but the rumour said fifteen people, didn’t it? So then the amount of people don’t match up. It’s different after all…”

“It’s fine, don’t worry about the details.” He said while waving his hand, “Right now it’s only a rumour.”

It can be dismissed as a rumour, but if it were real then it’s very scary - Was that it’s purpose?

“... Well, it doesn’t matter. Let’s get back to the issue at hand.”

“Eh? Issue?”

“Oh boy, you forgot again? You shouldn’t worry, these incidents with Enoshima Junko seem to be related, don’t they?”

I read through my notebook quickly - ah, that’s right! I remember now!

To begin with, several students at Hope’s Peak Academy have been

found dead, but that has nothing to do with me - I've been stalked by a crazy woman called Enoshima Junko, that's my problem.

"Hey, are you worried? Are you worried about Enoshima Junko's relation to The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History? Or perhaps that there is some sort of hidden motive behind Enoshima Junko stalking you, big sis. Does that make you worried?"

"Yeah, so tell me!" As Kamishiro-kun approached me as I steadily walked towards him.

"Well, you see…" Kamishiro-kun had a huge cheesy grin on his face, "I don't know."

"... Huh?" I was attacked by a sudden wave of dizziness and I could feel myself losing my balance.

"... Y-You don't know… What the… heck…" As if he didn't notice my obvious trembling and shaking, Kamishiro-kun began pacing around the room again.

"But, a month before the rumour spread, that girl was apparently interrogated by the Hope's Peak Academy's executive office. Suspicious, isn't it?"

"Very suspicious!" I straightened up my posture and raised my voice as I leaned forward. "Since she was interrogated and everything, doesn't that make a criminal?!"

"... It's a bit too early to say that. The rumours aren't confirmed yet."

That's probably true. I repeated the hypothesis in my head, convincing myself that it wasn't just a rumour.

"But you know, if there really was an incident… and if she is the one behind it… then shouldn't she be locked away or something?" As he said that, Kamishiro-kun leaned further against the desk. "The person who spread the rumour behind 'The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History' was probably Enoshima Junko as well."

"… Eh?"

"In that case, she might not be the culprit. I mean, a culprit spreading rumours about their own crime… that's really dangerous."

"But is that really it? Enoshima Junko was the one spreading the rumour…"

"A few weeks ago a cryptic email was sent to the reserve students, and it seems like that's how the rumour begun."

"So the person who sent that… was Enoshima Junko?"

Kamishiro-kun swallowed down his sweet bread and nodded.

"I have an underclassmen who is good with computers, they're a programmer. Every so often I get them to spy on the school servers. They happened to find that email by chance. The sender was unknown of course, but with a super spy like me on the case I immediately knew who sent it. Although, just to be on the safe side, I

didn't inform my junior of what the email contained or about the sender's identity. I didn't want them to get caught up in this dangerous mission, since I am a very caring and giving human being!"

I was about to ask why I was being involved in such a thing - but held my tongue before uttering anything.

"But, why do you think Enoshima Junko would be doing such a thing? Bothering to spread rumours about the incident in question..."

"I don't know." I replied in a refreshing but firm tone. "Well then, why don't we ask her ourselves?" I had a flash of inspiration, "Straight from the horse's mouth so to speak!"

"If I could have, I would have done that a long time ago…" Kamishiro-kun quickly shook his head. "I don't know what to do… I haven't even been able to find this Enoshima Junko. She doesn't come to class at all, the teachers don't seem to mind and her classmates don't know the details why… She really is a carefree student. Seeing as how I haven't seen her at all, it's possible she just dropped out of school."

"But I met Enoshima Junko. Inside this school too… it's written in my notebook…"

"It seems like Enoshima Junko wants you to be involved in this. That's why she appeared before you, stole your notebook and confessed to murdering someone, big sis… But I have no idea what she wants. I can't do anything but cheer you up with my laughter. KYAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAAA!" He said as he placed his hands at the back of his head and laughed happily.

"W-Wait a moment… This isn't really the time to be laughing!" I told

him off.

“It’s fine, it’s fine. We’ve got all the time in the world.” Kamishiro-kun yawned. “It’s still early days yet, so of course we don’t know the full story. Once I start investigating we’ll find out a lot of new things. Right now we’re still just guessing and putting out theories, we don’t know how much of it is true or not. What I’m saying it just leave it to me from here on out.”

Our conversation came to an end - We didn’t have anything more to discuss and Kamishiro-kun took another sweet bun out of his pocket. “Ah! A legendary three-flavoured sweet bread!” He happily puffed out his cheeks.

“Oh, right, right! I forgot an important detail!” Kamishiro-kun licked his sugar covered fingers and turned to me. “We haven’t talked about payment yet have we?”

“Eh? Payment?”

“Ahaha, don’t worry. I don’t really want or need any money… I mean I’m not really asking for anything amazing or anything…”

“Nothing important… so sweet bread perhaps…”

“Sweet breads fall under the important things category!” Kamishiro-kun hummed out as he shook his head vigorously.

“Um… so then…” I said as I tilted my head trying to think, Kamishiro-kun laughed at me.

“Something like, I don’t know, maybe a small favour for me.”

“Favo… eh, what… Wait, did you mean like a favour favour or...”

He had his big grin on a refreshing expression.

“Ah, I see, I see. You didn’t mean anything sexual did you? Sorry, sorry, I didn’t really understand what you mean. Anyway, you said nothing too amazing, didn’t you?”

No, that’s too embarrassing - I scratched my head and Kamishiro-kun replied with a shocked face.

“It’s good to know you have such pride in your body image, big sis!!”

“Somehow you just gave the word ‘shocked’ a new meaning.” I rested my head on one hand. As I rested my head I looked at Kamishiro-kun and asked him once more.

“So, by favour… what do you mean?”

“Well you may not have noticed but I have an unusually high sexual drive. In movies, after a spy solves the case, he embraces a woman, and big sis has that kind of face that just drives a man wild!” Kamishiro-kun said as he puffed out his chest.

“... That’s not something you should puff your chest out about!”

“Would you prefer a tent? Anyway, why don’t you puff out your chest, big sis. See, I’m doing it. Puff out that voluptuous, sweet, juicy, well-rounded chest of yours! Muhahaha…” I could see his ulterior motive clearly as he smiled evilly.

“U-Um… Say, do you happen to know where that sweet innocent boy from just a little earlier went… ?”

“Muhaha… Anyway, I’m really looking forward to solving these cases. Just to be on the safe side, you should stop taking baths. If you get smelly I’ll come save you.”

“T-there must be a manual on how to reset you to your previous personality!” As he continued I was having more trouble dealing with him.

“Well then!” Without even noticing my prior embarrassment, Kamishiro-kun clapped his hands, “That settles the fees!”

He scurried over to the door and with a quick “I’m off!” he ran out of the lab laughing evilly in the distance.

“W-Wait a minute! I didn’t agree to-”

rattle, bang

My sentence was tragically cut off by the sound of the door closing.

“I didn’t agree to… the payment…” My words echoed around the

room. I sat down limply on the bed. “B-but… I promised…”

Though, that sort of one-sided promise could barely be called a promise. It was my fault it ended up so one-sided though I guess. On top of that, for a one-sided favour, it was way too one-sided. If the feminists ever heard about this I don’t think they’d ever stop rallying over it!

Speaking of which-

That doesn’t matter to me at all - right?

“Yeah, I’ll ignore it… if I just ignore it it’ll be fine…” I muttered to someone who wasn’t there desperately as I laid down on the bed.

The rattling noise of the lab door opening sounded again. For a moment I thought Kamishiro-kun had come back and I looked over to see-

A fair skinned man standing in the doorway - My heart thumped.

“Ah! Matsuda-kuuuuuuuuuuuuuuun!!” As if I were a sprinter, I ran towards him in record breaking speed and hugged him. “Aaaaaah! You took too long! I feel like I’ve been waiting foreveeeeeer!”

As I hugged Matsuda-kun, his body went strangely stiff.

“Huh? Is something wrong?”

“I’d like to… continue that conversation from earlier…”

“... Hm? What conversation?” I didn’t understand what he was trying to say. I just don’t remember anymore. But, whatever’s fine. I don’t know what was happening earlier - But it’s fine as long as Matsuda-kun is here.

“Hmm, what sort of conversation was it…” I tilted my neck as I rubbed my face against his chest. I laughed out “hawhawhawhaw…” as I absent-mindedly rubbed my face on his chest. I thought he’d be a little angry if I stained his shirt but his reply was quite the opposite.

“It was bad…”

“Eh?” I looked up at him surprised. “What’s… What’s bad?”

Matsuda-kun stared at my face and coughed lightly.

“No, it’s fine if you don’t remember. Anyway, it was bad.” He replied, looking away.

I don’t really understand what he meant but my heart had stopped thumping and was tightening instead now. As it did I buried my face in his chest.

As I hugged him, I seemed to forget about all my worries. I felt like I was about to collapse into a pile of rubble, and he refreshed my feelings - Everything outside of this small room in this universe of ours was absolutely insignificant.

I suddenly became worried I needed to apologize. It didn't seem to matter after I had started feeling so much better.

Now. Now is the only time that matters.

This is the only thing that matters.

Now is the only thing I understand. Now is the only thing I know. Now is the only thing I remember.

That's why I just want to bury myself in the happiness of the moment.

"... Anyway, how did you get out of the rope?" Matsuda-kun's voice brought me out of my thoughts.

"... What rope?"

"You don't remember how you got out of the rope…?"

"Nope, sorry!"

"You really are a troublesome one."

"Yup, sorry!" As I said that, Matsuda-kun sighed out and chuckled softly as he shook his head.

“Anyway… you’re starting to hurt me.”

“Oh, it’s fine for just a little longer.” I answered him as if I were a spoiled child and Matsuda-kun sighed. I felt his body relax and as if I held the entire world in my hands I felt a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

This is my world.

And it’s the only world I have.

I felt happy as I closed my eyes. Thump, thump, thump, I heard his heart beat in his chest. In my hands I held all I ever wanted, and the sound acted as one final blessing.

“Parade…” Matsuda-kun suddenly spoke up.

“... Hm? What was that?” I asked as my eyes remained closed.

“Somehow… the parade outside has become louder again…” I tried to listen for what he meant, but-

Thump, thump.

I could only hear the soft beating of his heart.

Right now it’s only Matsuda-kun and me.

Those things outside don’t matter.

So just-

I didn’t finish what I was saying. For a while longer I buried my face in my beloved Matsuda-kun’s chest. I reluctantly let go of my beloved Matsuda-kun, I went back to my room without my beloved Matsuda-kun, I took off my shoes as I thought of my beloved Matsuda-kun, I lay in bed as I muttered about my beloved Matsuda-kun and finally I melted away into dreams about my beloved Matsuda-kun.

Nothing else.

Nothing else mattered.

Nothing else was important to me.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 13

Hope’s Peak Academy East District.

The courtyard -

The area surrounding the facility was completely dark, the lights outside were arranged at regular intervals but made little difference to the lighting. On the edge of the courtyard, outside the clock tower - stood a lone girl.

She squinted, looking at the clocktower in front of her.

“Any moment now.” She muttered quietly.

The girl stood there, waiting for someone. Although when she had first contacted them, they replied, “We don’t need to meet” - she then offered an exchange of information and thus they made an appointment. For someone who made a profession out of digging up dirt on people, it was easy for her. For people she does not know about, it’s easier for her to meet them in person - That was her opinion.

The hunger for fame is a scary thing.

Even if it’s seems impossible, people are determined to become great.

And so she waited - for a member of Hope’s Peak Academy’s Steering

Committee. She needed to meet them no matter what. She needed to talk to them face-to-face no matter what. She needed to talk to them about the cover up on “that information”-

Most likely, the principle, her employer didn’t know about the information. That’s why it was vital that she questioned him face-to-face.

It had not yet even been a few days since she begun her investigation, but she had a reason to be this quick.

She had an incredible talent - that was why.

That girl’s name was - Kirigiri Kyouko.

She was from Hope’s Peak Academy’s 78th batch, her talent was “Super High School Level Detective”.

Currently that girl was investigating “that incident” within Hope’s Peak Academy.

“He’s late…” She muttered, looking up at the clock tower again.

Five minutes late.

I should have told him to be more punctual.

As she frowned, a line between her eyebrows became more obvious.

However as she looked at the clock tower once more, her crease vanished. In the distance she saw a figure. The figure seemed to be on guard as they looked around while slowly walking towards her. Gradually the figure became clearer - It was an old man with a black suit and tie, as if he were in mourning at a funeral. His hair was styled back with pomade and looked like a man made artifact.

As the man approached, his expression became clearer. He had wrinkles on his forehead that seemed to be carved into his very skull, and beneath them, deep set eyes which glared at Kyouko.

Soon they were around 3 metres away from each other.

The man stopped.

“... Was it you who called me here?” His mouth, drawn on his face in a straight line, opened and he spoke to Kyouko with a gritty voice.

“What the hell-” The old man’s words were cut off.

Something fell from the sky and landed in front of Kyouko’s eyes.

The man, and his words were crushed.

It seemed to happen in slow motion.

Or perhaps like seeing the frames of a video, one at a time.

A school desk fell from the sky, and fell onto the man in front of her. As he was hit by the desk, the man's body seemed to fold over in the impact, while the desk on the other hand bounced off him into the air. As that happened, another desk fell down. This one crushed the man's waist and he bent backwards like a doll. Another desk fell and bent the man's neck at an unnatural angle - The man didn't have enough time to even look surprised. His face was frozen as he called out to Kyoko. The desks fell to the ground in a cloud of dust and the man's figure was obscured.

Immediately after, a delayed noise sounded out.

An immensely loud sound.

As that happened, a desk flew out of the cloud of dust and missed Kirigiri by mere inches, it spun like a spinning top behind her.

That was the crazy scene that transpired before her.

That was the outcome of the crazy scene.

The moment the man standing in front of Kyouko had opened his mouth, a large desk fell out of the sky and crushed him in a nano second.

It interrupted her thoughts for a moment - but only for a moment. As the dust was still settling she ran to the mountain of desks and started shifting them. A bright red liquid was already spreading around the rubble of desks. A dark liquid flowed from his eyes, ears, nose and too many other places to list.

Kyouko quickly decided to instead look above of her. On the roof of a school building she spotted a silhouette. Her eyes came into focus. Behind the figure, the moon beamed brightly. The figure looked as though it was holding something above it - they threw it.

A folding chair was speeding straight towards Kyouko.

She dodged it and ran towards the school building.

There was a crashing sound behind her.

She ran into building, keeping as low to the ground as she could and ran up the stairs. At that point it no longer mattered whether she made herself a target or not. Now she was simply running for a lead, even in danger she was just as enthusiastic. In little to no time she had arrived on the landing and found the remains of a padlock on door leading to the roof.

This school should pay more attention to crime prevention.

She thought sarcastically as she grasped the doorknob. She could feel the cold bite of the metal on her fingertips. She twisted the doorknob and the door opened quietly. The moment she opened the door, a strong gust of wind passed by Kyouko.

As she took a single step she looked around the rooftop, illuminated by the dark night sky. However, there was nothing there. She stepped onto the concrete floor and looked behind the door, every nook and cranny she could find, she searched everywhere.

But she really couldn’t find anything.

I'm too late.

Overcome by a sense of frustration, she leaned against the roof fence. Looking up she whispered to the night sky.

"This is why… I hate my job…"

Chills went down her spine.

She had a bad feeling.

She turned around and looked at the courtyard through the iron fence.

A cold blast of wind hit her face and for a moment everything went cloudy. Around the clock tower she could see the remains of the desks and folding chair.

Of course they were there.

However the dead body - was gone.

Kyouko gritted her teeth as she took her phone from her uniform pocket. Her finger descended towards the call button but she hesitated momentarily.

Even so, she pressed it.

She listened to the voice of a man through the phone.

“Should we meet soon?” Kyouko said, not bothering to introduce herself, “I have something I need to report. I’ll be heading over there soon.”

Print
A Web Document from Box

After a few minutes, the figure of Kirigiri Kyouko on the rooftop disappeared.

Riiiip, riiiip - A strange sound like something being teared echoed through the courtyard in the East District.

“Ta daaaa! A taser gun!” A high school girl held something like a pistol in her hands. The girl looked ahead of her at two security guards who had collapsed on top of each other. As they laid face down, you could see a thin wire coming out of their backs and connecting to the pistol the girl held.

“Hey, hey!” She called out as she pulled the trigger.

Riiiiiiiip, riiiiiiip, riiiiiiiip.

Along with the intense sound, the already unconscious bodies trembled and shook violently.

“...Aha!” As the girl watched, she had a crazy, ecstatic grin on her face.

Enoshima Junko.

She wore no makeup, as if she had only just gotten out of bed and loudly yawned again, in her hands she held a self defence weapon

called a taser gun. A thin wire flew out from the gun to her target and through that wire, there was a surge of electricity. Normally such a weapon would not cause people to die, but she had modified this one so it was more powerful, as such it wasn't strange when people died due to it.

In truth, it was just to ensure she had an upper hand.

It was her self-defence weapon for despair.

After she had played with the taser for a while, she grew bored and with her bare hands grabbed the wire and shoved it into a bag. She then scrunched the bag up and threw it into a nearby rubbish bin.

"Well, that takes care of that. That genderbent Kindaichi-chan must have disappeared somewhere… Upupu, I wonder if we'll fight later?"

The girl patted down her chest and walked across the courtyard to the clock tower regally. She didn't bother to hide in the shadows, instead she tried to show off in a way to say "here I am, look at me!". Of course, if anyone watched she'd just kill them, though it may be ominous.

"Anyway, that genderbent Conan-chan is trying the get involved, isn't she? Well it's the principal's fault for meddling… But, I didn't plan for her involvement in this scenario. Well then, what to do. It's interesting that she's here and all, but she might get in the way of my beautifully orchestrated plan… oh dear, dear, dear, dear, dear, dear?"

The girl seemed to topple forward as she stopped and looked ahead of her, at the debris of desks on the ground. As she looked at the mess of metal, her cruel smile seemed to melt off her face.

“... There’s no dead body.” Her words felt like they weighed as much as led as they fell out of mouth. “It happened again… this is fucking despair-inducing. It’s so despair-inducing it’s like from out of a dream…” Her face twisted into a smile.

As Enoshima laughed, she kicked the folding chair at her feet. It didn’t look like she kicked it with much strength - but the chair flew a few metres away towards one of the lights and as if it were a ball used for pingpong, it flew skywards.

As the sound that reverberated throughout the late night courtyard disappeared, the figure named Enoshima Junko also disappeared.

Like a shadow.

Print
A Web Document from Box

CHAPTER 15

What was that?

Kirigiri Kyouko thought she heard something and stopped walking. She thought she could hear the sound of bells ringing, but as she listened more intently, it was silent all through the corridor.

Was is just my imagination?

Usually in this situation she would investigate until she was happy, but currently she had more pressing matter to attend to. So she began walking again and hurried to her destination.

In normal circumstances, student entry into the faculty building was strictly forbidden though Kyouko walked through the corridor at a brisk pace. In the dim corridor, only her footsteps were heard. Any sign of staff within the building had completely disappeared. It had most likely been this way since before she had entered.

For the time being anyhow, she seemed to have arrived at her destination quicker than she initially imagined she would. The plate on the door in front of her read “Principal’s Office”. After Kyouko shot a glare at the door, she opened it without bothering to knock.

“You’re already here. You’re quick.” The principal, Kirigiri Jin, said sitting behind his desk with a smile.

Kyouko looked around the room she just entered since it was her first time in there, though it was mostly out of habit.

It was messy - it left on other impression on her. What seemed to be sheets of paper and documents as well as other things were spread throughout the entire room.

"... I've been busy moving things, so I haven't had a chance to clean up yet…" Kyouko noticed Kirigiri, he was scratching his head as he spoke. However Kyouko returned a cold stare. She was not here to chat, so she immediately changed the subject to the topic at hand.

"I met with one of the members of the steering committee earlier, but someone interfered…" Kirigiri opened his mouth to interject, but was unable to think of a reply, Kyouko immediately continued with what she was saying.

"He was killed. More to the point, right in front of me."

"K-Killed?"

"However, his corpse quickly disappeared…"

"... Disappeared?" Kirigiri found he was unable to think of a proper response and instead just repeated what she said. However Kyouko ignored him and continued in an indifferent tone.

"But isn't it odd? They killed someone right in front of me but then they hid the body. I don't understand whether they were trying to show themselves killing the person or whether they just wanted to hide the body. Something feels wrong."

Kyouko went on to talk heatedly on the matter without allowing Kirigiri to interrupt.

“Furthermore, there’s been another member from the steering committee has been missing since yesterday, hasn’t there? If that’s the case, he may be in danger. You need to get in touch with him immediately and warn him. No, not just him. All the members of the steering committee-”

“W… Wait a second!” Kirigiri interrupted her, standing from his seat. “A-Are you certain? H-He was killed, that’s…”

Kyouko did not reply - Instead she responded with a grim look without saying anything. Seeing that, Kirigiri lost all his strength and sunk back down to his seat.

“Why… That’s just…” As if answering his questions, a deep sigh could be heard.

“... Aside from him being hidden, he may have been killed simply because he had met me…”

“R-Really?” Kirigiri thrust his hands onto his desk as if he was about to stand again. “Tell me, why?”

Looking at the man - Kyouko felt a feeling similar to disappointment. She reflected that emotion in her gaze. She looked at him as if saying she didn’t know why either - in contrary to her expectations, the man did not bother to notice her expression at all.

“I asked you to tell me…”

After letting out a deep sigh, Kyouko answered quietly.

“He may have been killed like that to send out a warning… assuming members of the steering committee are being killed due to ‘that incident’.”

Kirigiri Jin gulped down the remaining saliva in his already dry mouth.

“Do you… already know? About The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope’s Peak Academy’s History…”

“To an extent.” Kyouko replied unexpectedly straightforwardly, Kirigiri frowned.

“I see…” As he said that, he slowly stood up from his chair. He blinked trying to take to heart what she said before asking again.

“So then, in short, members of the steering committee are being killed because we chose to cover up ‘that incident’?”

“No, it’s not only that.” Kyouko shook her head slightly. “It’s not just because the steering committee are covering up the incident, but also because of something else just as important is being hidden… I would wonder if it were that person instead.”

Hearing that Kirigiri took a moment to think of a proper response and muttered quietly with a thoughtful expression, “Perhaps… the committee knew who the culprit was, and have been hiding it?”

“... I knew it.” For the first time since entering the room, Kyouko eyes

met Kirigiri's. "I thought you didn't about the criminal being hidden. I didn't think you were even supposed to ask me about it… I see now, you were also involved with the criminal's concealment." Her words carried a feeling of irritation.

"No, you're wrong." Kirigiri quickly shook his head in response. "I wasn't informed that the criminal was also being covered up. That's something the steering committee had decided by themselves. For that matter, they haven't told me anything directly. I've been investigating everything myself."

As he said that Kyouko frowned. "...You've been investigating by yourself?"

"Is that really so strange?" Kirigiri replied bitterly, "I've been doing as much as I can. After all, the blood of the great detective family flows in my veins-"

"STOP IT!" Kyouko suddenly shouted.

In surprise, Kirigiri raised his head and looked at her - Kyouko was patiently glaring at him. (how the fuck do you patiently glare at someone??)

The girl didn't bother to try hiding the emotions bubbling up inside of her. Eyes filled with anger looked straight at Kirigiri. Looked straight at her employer. Looked straight at the school principal. Looked straight at her biological father.

"Don't say it liked some kind of sick joke." That's why-

“... Sorry.” He could only apologize. “... That was tasteless of me.” As he said that, he deeply bowed. No matter what the reasons were, no matter what her thoughts were, if she looked at him, he was only reminded of the home and daughter he abandoned. He wasn’t wrong in doing so. He was not going offer any excuses, he had no reason to.

But at the very least-

He could tell her his thoughts-

No, he couldn’t say that either.

“... It’s fine.” A voice replied as his head rose - Kyouko had returned to her cool, collected appearance. She was leaning against a bookcase on the wall. “Let’s get back on topic.” She continued, calmly.

“Sorry, well then…” Kirigiri expelled a deep sigh. However, he had some trouble concentrating. Kyouko then said something that surprised him. The words spilled from her lips a struck him like a sword.

“It’s Kamukura Izuru… isn’t it?”

Kirigiri reacted slightly. His eyes, his fingertips, his breathing - Kyouko didn’t miss his reaction.

“... I was right?” As if he had been put under arrest by her gaze - Kirigiri had remembered something. No, not remembered, it was hatred, the eyes of the detective clan he had become so scared of. The eyes that glared at criminals, that spied, that could detect any secret. His own daughter glared at him with such eyes, Kirigiri’s mouth

slackened.

As to be expected, she has the talent of the Kirigiri family!

What a wonderful talent!

"... What's wrong?" Kyouko inquired.

"Nothing, I was just a little impressed…" Kirigiri answered, smiling slightly. "In such a short time you were able to find out about Kamukura Izuru and about The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History at my request, furthermore you deducted that Kamukura Izuru was the culprit behind The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History… remarkable." In his own excitement, Kirigiri had begun talking quite fast.

"In any case, I wonder if perhaps you could give me more information. Who is this Kamukura Izuru person from the rumours? It's strange but I'm not even aware of whether they're a man or a woman yet…"

However, Kirigiri immediately shook his head.

"I better not say." At the same time the smile on his face disappeared.

"... I see, that's fine." I'll just find out by myself- though she did not say the next part but instead backed down and shifted her gaze to her feet before continuing. "So then, you really don't know. Why would you ask me to find Kamukura knowing they are the criminal behind the incident? You're trying to cover it up, aren't you? Wouldn't it be better for the steering committee to continue to shelter them?"

“No, I can’t leave this to the steering committee…”

“... Hm?” Kyouko grimaced. “Could it be you and your staff don’t trust the steering committee?”

“No, that’s not it at all.” Kirigiri replied immediately, destroying the calm mood. “But I don’t think they’re right… They’ll end up making the problem worse.”

“Worse?”

“I don’t think it’ll just end after hiding ‘that incident’... that’s what I’m thinking.”

Without bothering to urge him on, Kyouko continued to listen to Kirigiri’s story.

“It’s not because ‘that incident’ is already over and done with. Rather, somewhere out there, the incident is still continuing… I have a feeling. If this feeling keeps tugging at me… I fear something irreversible may happen. That’s why it’s necessary to hear of Kamukura’s story. However, even now I am not sure of the whereabouts of the steering committee. It makes it hard for me to trust them.”

“.....” As Kirigiri finished, something struck Kyouko as odd.

It wasn’t something Kirigiri had said, but rather how he said it. ‘Somewhere out there, the incident is still continuing’ was what he

said, that's what Kyouko noticed. Through his tone and gestures he conveyed a feeling of seriousness. But that wasn't all. There was a slight slip of emotion.

Unintentionally, she was reminded of her grandfather.

Kyouko's grandfather, Kirigiri Jin's father - was continuing actively as a detective as well as the head of the family. Kyouko's first job as a detective, though it was only an assistant role, was to help carry out some operations with him. Her grandfather had watched over as she carried out her role better than he had expected, he did not say anything but his expression was proud.

The man in front of her had a similar expression to the one her grandfather had back then. However she dared not say anything.

"... What's wrong?" Kirigiri raised his voice - She hadn't noticed the sudden silence.

"Nothing." Kyouko went back to the situation in front of her as she casually brushed her hair out of her face. "Anyway, it's fine, you were the one who asked me to look for this Kamukura person and ascertain their whereabouts without the steering committee knowing." As she said that she looked directly at Kirigiri.

"But, is it really okay to impose on you with this?" Kirigiri frowned for a moment.

"... What do you mean?"

"I said it before, didn't I? The steering committee are being targeted

before they're harbouring the criminal behind the incident."

"In short, I am looking for the criminal, Kamukura's whereabouts." As he realised the meaning behind her words, Kirigiri's mouth twitched into a smile.

"Speaking of which, I myself am also a suspect… correct?"

"Even if you say that, I'm aware you are innocent." Kyouko folded her arms as she spoke. "After the body disappeared, I called the phone in this room… Seeing as you answered, unfortunately it gives you a solid alibi."

"It's a little harsh to say… unfortunately." Kirigiri quietly laughed before he bitterly grinned.

"Do you have any other worries? Don't you think I might call the police before I find Kamukura Izuru?"

"I'm not worrying." Kirigiri laughed. "For a detective the requestor's word is absolute, but for the police the law is absolute. You never turn down a case, and that's why you are the 'Super High School Level Detective'."

For example, no matter how much she hated a client, she could never show it.

"I wonder, why did you take the time to ask for me? Instead of me coming here to investigate by myself you decided to take it upon yourself to request my help?" Her words carried some emotion. No one felt more so than Kyouko herself - thus she cursed herself

immediately after she said it.

“I apologize if I lead you to believe that’s true. I asked you simply due to your talent in the field. There were no ulterior motives.” He carefully worded his reply so as to make it perfectly clear. This only left Kyouko more irritated.

But she was more frustrated at herself than at him. In the first place she was not supposed to have any emotional connections to her father. She thought she didn’t even hold a grudge. Especially seeing as this was his request. It was just the same as usual, nothing made this any different to a normal request. So then why did she speak so harshly. This is completely -

like how a spoiled child would act.

“... That’s enough. I’ve had enough of this idle chatter.” Kyouko said in a tense voice, shaking herself out of her thoughts. “... In any case, we cannot afford any more victims. You must advise the steering committee. They cannot continue giving Kamukura Izuru shelter, that will only create more victims.”

“Ah, of course…” After he replied, Kyouko’s and Kirigiri’s eyes met once more. Kyouko turned away and started to walk towards the door - Kirigiri raised his voice unexpectedly.

“This may be a dangerous request.” Kyouko stopped unintentionally at his words.

“So what?” She remained with her back turned, only turning her head to look at him. “... I’m a detective. After all, I’m descended from the detective family, Kirigiri.”

"... Well, if you say so." His words gave Kirigiri another unsettling feeling and she left the room at a brisk pace, as she lay her hand on the door knob, she heard his voice again.

"However, the preparatory school's 'parade' has been becoming more serious day by day…" He called out in a firm tone. "Somehow their timing is too good. I don't think 'that incident' is entirely unrelated. That's why… I'm saying..." Kirigiri cleared his throat, trying to sound normal, "... be careful."

He sounded like a father doting on his daughter before she went out. Hearing that Kyouko's face softened. She didn't reply at all. She remained completely silent as she left the office.

After ensuring the door was closed, Kirigiri took a deep breath and sighed. However, a smile lingered on his gloomy face.

She really has a magnificent talent.

He muttered quietly in his head - He couldn't help but smile more.

After she left the principle's office, Kirigiri coughed lightly before walking down the corridor, her footsteps echoing. They echoed the same way they had when she first walked down here.

The girl remained expressionless. She whispered something,

“… You didn’t need to tell me.” She heard her own voice as it faded, her silhouette disappeared into the depths of the corridor.

Print
A Web Document from Box

Chapter 16

There are so many different ways things could end.

Myself, Otonashi Ryouko, and Matsuda Yasuke-kun have decided to leave Hope's Peak Academy. Currently we are waiting in the airport lobby. Together we'll board a plane and plan to go the the land of freedom, the United States of America. Now that I say it, I've finally really realised it. Seeing as I'm with Matsuda-kun, I'm still in my world, I didn't need to stay at Hope's Peak Academy. That's why it doesn't sound like such an unreasonable story. However, if you're worried about my crummy story continuing then please tell someone else about it. We're busy. After we go to America we'll be working in corn fields to develop a new kind of corn, then afterwards we'll be going to NASA in order to move our base of operations to the moon. "Hey, Matsuda-kun!" I say as I eye the seat next to me, Matsuda-kun is busy doing something like rice-planting under his sheets. "Are you sure you can plant corn now? Maybe it's still a bit too early?" I said and then he replied, "Fuck off! I'm burying the saibamen right now!" as he quickly planted the seeds. "It's no good, Matsuda-kun! Nappa said that saibamen don't grow unless there's enough nutrition in the soil!" I said but Matsuda-kun didn't listen as he thump thump thump thump thump thump!

I opened my eyes.

I slowly rose up and looked around. Beige coloured carpet. A small vanity. An empty bookshelf. Everywhere I looked, there were notes saying "This is my room". Seeing as I put all this effort into putting up these notes - I can only assume this is my room. I let out a breath and calmed myself - I didn't have time for this.

Thump, thump, thump, thump.

Someone was pounding at the door to my room.

“I-I’m coming… Wait a moment…”

Thump, thump, thump.

Ka thump, ka thump, ka thump.

Honestly, they’ve never heard of patience, their knocks became more rhythmic and annoying, I crawled off my bed - I noticed I had been wearing my shoes while I was sleeping.

Calm down, calm down - I thought as I ripped off my shoes, it was way too late for this, I grabbed my notebook from my bedside table and rushed over to the door.

“... Who is it?”

I took out the key and cautiously opened the door slightly.

“YAHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!”

I spotted through the gap a girl with blonde hair wearing flashy make up.

“Uwaah!” Surprised I unintentionally stepped back.

“Hey, hey, are you always sleeping? You know it’s already noon, right? You’re like Piiko’s counterpart!” (Osugi and Piiko are well known openly gay talents in Japan)

“… Huh?”

“… No, wait, I meant Osugi. Anyway you sleep too much… That’s why you’re having trouble keeping up with what I’m saying!”

Somehow she managed to keep this conversation going by herself, just who was this girl, I opened my notebook-

“Oh dear, you forgot me? Fine, I’ll tell you myself, I’m Enoshima Junko-chan! ‘Super High School Level Fashion Girl’ Enoshima Junko-chaaaan!”

Enoshima Junko - I looked through my notebook for any memories of her. Quickly an alarm started to ring out in my head. She was the egotistical, self-proclaimed ‘murderer’, the only girl I was supposed to never have anything to do under any circumstances!

“G-GO AWAAAAAAAAAAY!” I shouted as I tried to close the door. But like one of those annoying salesmen, she slammed her foot in the door stopping it from being closed.

“What’s all this? Don’t tell me, you’re escaping? Hang on, what will you do if you hurt my feelings?”

“I-IT’S FINE, JUST GO AWAAAY!!!” With every ounce of strength I possessed, I desperately tried to close the door - I couldn’t get it any closer to shutting.

“DING DOOONG! I got it, a brilliant idea! Didn’t you say you thought I was crazy? Don’t you think I have a few screws loose? You don’t need to tell me, do you? I realised that a long time ago, didn’t I? Well, I have something that’ll blow your miiind!” As she was finishing, she threw her hands out wide with crazy eyes.

“W-What…?”

“Hm, you wanna know? But if you figure it out - your mind will be blown!” This girl’s like something from an alternate dimension.

“... But, that’s not what I’m wondering, I want to know how I come into things!”

“Well, if you’re so insistent… Excuse meeeeeeee!” Like a bulldozer she forced my door open and then entered my room without permission.

“STOOOOOOOOOP!” As I tried to escape from her, running to the back of my room, she grabbed the collar of my shirt. “...Ughh!”

“You know, wouldn’t it be better if you stopped trying to escape me? I mean, after all, I’m the one who has your old notebook captive now aren’t I? Don’t you hate it? Haven’t you come to detest me?”

“I-It’s fine… It’s fine that you have my old memories! I don’t remember them anyway!” As I violently struggled, for some reason the girl let go of me, I fled as fast as I could to my bed. I pulled the blanket over my head and began yelling out to her. “So, just leave me alone already! Stop trying to get me involved! This has nothing to do with me!” As I yelled out she replied.

“Hmmm, I see, you’re just fine being holed up in your tiny world…” I could hear Enoshima-san’s cold voice through the blanket. “But you know, that Matsuda Yasuke guy will just end up dying… are you really okay with that?” At that moment, feelings I thought I had buried bubbled up and welled in my chest.

“W-What’d you say?! What are you going to do with Matsuda-kun?!” I tossed away the blanket and the girl crept closer to me and then, something unexpected happened.

Enoshima-san wore a huge grin on her face, and she pulled me into a hug.

“... Huh?”

As I was frozen stiff by sheer surprise, she softly whispered something into my ear.

“Hey, it’s okay. If you hate me enough, you’ll want to kill me. If you come to hate me then it’ll become all the more despair-inducing… and that’ll make this story all the more thrilling.”

“W-wait… Let go of me!!”

“Hate, despise, fight… break out of your shell and let the real you run free. You’re not so trapped in your world as you think. Now then, set free the new you. It might hurt now, but don’t worry. You’re still at the teething stage. Once you’re through that, it’ll be your birthday… and the real you will be born!”

I bit Enoshima-san's ear.

"OWOWOWOWOWOWOW!!"

As she flinched, I took my chance and jumped back.

"I-It's too irresponsible! Why do you keep trying to get us involved in something that has nothing to do with us?"

"Ahaha! Even if you're not involved in it, even if it has nothing to do with you, you'll end up dragged in!" She said as she rubbed her bitten ear - she turned to me with an ecstatic smile on her face. "Car crashes, natural disasters, accidents, war… There's a countless amount of people who die in them but don't have anything to do with them, do you understand me?"

"T-That's-"

"That's the same! It seems like that to me!"

I quietly began praying.

Dear God, I beg of you. Please send a meteorite or something right now to hit this girl on the head. If you do that, I'll continue worshipping you for the rest of my life, right next to Matsuda-kun!

"Besides, you've been involved in this for a long time now. You can say you have nothing to do with it as much as you like, but you've just forgotten about it."

"... Huh?" My prayer was interrupted by an overwhelming sense of confusion. "By involved… what do you mean… ?"

"Hm? It's already happened." She dropped her voice and spoke in a commanding manner. "The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History. You've got plenty to do with that incident."

Quickly 'Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook' was grasped by Enoshima-san.

"L-Let go of… that…"

"Heeey, have you ever thought that memories you can't remember are pretty worthless and meaningless? That's why you're Boobs-for-brains-chan!" She laughed lightly as she slowly grew closer. "You know, even if you forget your memories, your actions won't exactly disappear with them… That said, even if you forget the modern world, your actions will still influence it, won't they… ?"

"W-what are you saying… ?"

"Hey, heeey, have you ever thought about it? Your actions affect people all over the globe, you might hurt someone, you might torment someone."

"T-That's-"

"Honestly, what a cruel world. But it's still the world… You're more tangled up and intertwined with people everywhere than you think.

That's why one person's actions can save the world, and one person's actions can lead the world into a chain reaction of despair… Ufufu, it's too incredible. This truly is a worthy world to live in!"

I listened to her stupid, absurd speech, I couldn't bear to listen anymore and I had a shameful thought. Why is that? Somewhere in my mind I agreed with her.

"… Are you convinced now? Well then, let's go back to the start of our discussion." As she said that, Enoshima-san folded her arms. "From now on I'll go all out for you. In any case, since you're so involved with The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History, you're probably thinking 'Just how am I so involved in The Worst, Largest Incident in Hope's Peak Academy's History?' and so, we should probably move our conversation to that next, shouldn't we? Is that okay with you?"

"I-It's fine with me… though it's a little sudden…"

"Alright, I'll tell you!" Enoshima-san ignored my complaint and continued. "By which I mean I won't tell you at all!"

"Which is it?" She could at least be a little more clear.

"I mean, it'd just be boring if I told you everything now… That's what I think anyway. So I'll explain what you have to do with the incident and about your real self… I think that's a good flow of the conversation."

"M-My true self…"

This isn't a game!

"You were just thinking 'This isn't a game!" but I can't tell you about that bit. It doesn't fit in the story. I'll just drop a hint instead… yeah, that's what I'll do. Because it's that kind of story."

I gave up as her wording became more and more messed up - There's no in trying point anymore. How I feel translating this stuff.

"Can you sum up what you mean?"

"I said I'd give you a hint!" Enoshima-san answered in an annoyed tone. "By the way, when I tell you the hint, my role here will come to an end. After I finish what I'm saying, I'll go away."

"G-Go away… Eh, really?!" I leaned forward without thinking. Up until I had been in a slump.

"Okay, I'll tell you! Then I'll go!"

"… G-Go for it, I'm n-not especially lonely… or anything!" I was kind of overjoyed with this turn of fate - Enoshima-san's lips trembled as she opened them slightly.

"… By the way, since this is kinda important, make sure you write it in that memo book of yours."

"I will, I will! I got it already so please continue!" As I prompted her, I readily held my notebook - Enoshima-san cleared her voice softly and

announced in a loud voice.

“Ta-daaaaaa! This is an announcement! The hint is ‘Enoshima Junko-chan’s purpoooose’!”As she said that she held up her right hand and made a peace sign.

“In truth, she has two purposeeeeeees!”

Saying that she lifted her left hand and made a peace sign while pointed one finger up with her right hand.

“Purpose number one is the crush the symbol of this school’s hope, Kamukura Izuru, until there is nothing left!” She then pointed up a second finger with her right hand.

“And then the other purpose is…” She paused to think carefully on how to say it - and then she practically screamed what she said next. “TO KILL YOUR BELOVED DARLING, MATSUDA YASUKEEEEEEEEEEEE!!”

Flomp.

As I heard that, I noticed I had dropped my notebook. I froze. My voice was completely paralyzed.

Kill your beloved darling, Matsuda Yasuke.

As I thought about her incomprehensible words, fear and anxiety bubbled up in me and in no time at all, spread to the tips of my

fingers and toes. I was stiff.

It was like I had been stuffed into a full body cast, I couldn't move a single finger. As I remained silent, Enoshima-san continued to stare at me.

"....."

It was silent again.

The girl kept her mouth firmly shut.

It stayed silent - Enoshima-san, with a trembling hand, stood up and left my room.

Thunk.

There was a sound of a door closing - I felt like an anemic, crouching down in a huge crowd.

"W-What… the hell……."

My voice sounded like a small, dying bird trying to sing, my throat was squeezed shut.

"Matsuda-kun… she's going to…….?"

Kill?

Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.

Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.

Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill. Kill.

As I thought about that cruel word, it seemed to fill my entire world.

“She c-can’t… She j-just can’t do that…”

My face felt hot - my hair seemed to stand on end as my face heated up.

“She c-can’t… do that…”

My chest felt hot too - a fiery fury welled in my heart as it began to beat faster. As that happened something strange happened.

A hot magma boiled up from the pit of my stomach and eventually exploded as it reached my chest. It spread from my heart and continued to flow to every muscle in my body.

I was motivated.

“I c-can’t! I ABSOLUTELY CAN’T LET HER WIIIIIIIIIIN!!” As I

screamed that I ran out of my room into the dormitory corridor. I wouldn't have quite believed it myself, I ran down the hallway like a bullet.

In my hand 'Otonashi Ryouko's Memory Notebook' flapped noisily in the wind. As I heard my precious partner's cries - I yelled out in my mind.

I'll protect my world!

I'll protect Matsuda-kun!

The wind pushed against me as I ran down the dormitory corridor.

Matsuda-kun, wait for me!

I'll be there soon!

Otonashi Ryouko runs.

To become the saviour of my world and of Matsuda-kun - I'll run.

I still hadn't realized it.

Me going to such huge lengths was in itself the very beginning of my own despair -

I still hadn’t realised just how despair-inducing it was.

To be continued in the next volume.

Print
A Web Document from Box